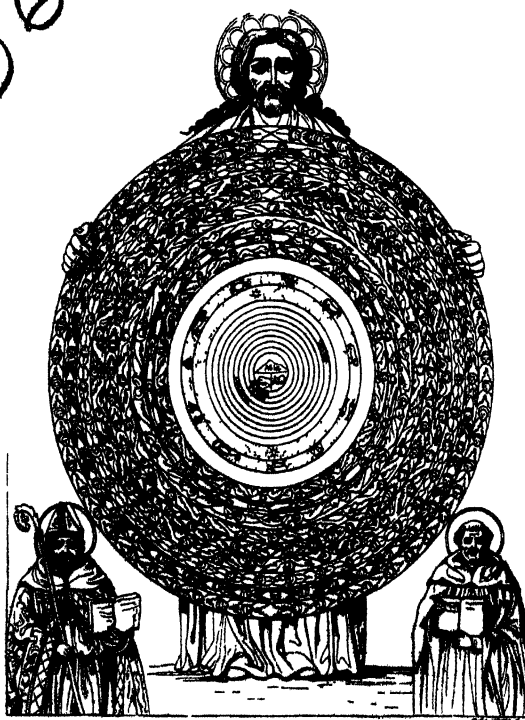


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From the Campo Santo at Pisa

G.3.
50.

THE
DIVINE COMEDY;

OR,

THE INFERNO, PURGATORY, AND PARADISE,

OF

DANTE

BORN
MCCCLXV.



ALIGHIERI.

DIED
MCCCXXI.

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH

By FREDERICK POLLOCK, Esq.



WITH FIFTY ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN BY GEORGE SCHAEF, JUN.

ENGRAVED BY DALZIEL.

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PREFACE.



It has been my endeavour in the present version of Dante's great Poem to be strictly literal in the rendering of the original Italian into the English of our own times, so far as I found it possible, regard being had to the idioms of the two languages, and to the preservation of a metrical form. To a certain extent also I have tried to represent to the Reader the actual arrangement, as well as the true English equivalent of the original, and I have made it a condition to retain the order and identity of the lines, except where this could not be done without violating more essential requirements.

In working out this design, it will, I trust, be found that no words of individual importance have been added or omitted by me. Omission indeed is almost out of the question in dealing with Dante : the obvious danger lies the other way, and it is by the dilution of his words, and by the insertion of epithets, not to be justified by the text, that he has most suffered in translation.

I am very conscious how imperfect any attempt of

this kind must be, and of the many defects to be found in the following pages ; but for these I must beg all the indulgence that may fairly be accorded to the difficulty of the undertaking, and to an honest desire to perform it with care and faithfulness.

Where so much difference exists in the original Italian text of various editions of the Divine Comedy, it is desirable to state that I have almost uniformly followed the readings of Ciardetti's Florentine Edition of 1830. This professes to be a reprint of that of the Minerva of Padua (1822), which stands in the highest estimation.

In preparing the notes which accompany the translation, the aim has been to make them as few and as brief as is consistent with such explanation and information as are absolutely necessary ; and (with rare exceptions), no reference occurs in them to difficulties or matters of interest which do not immediately arise upon the face of the translation. In doubtful places I have introduced no discussion, but have ventured at once to present my own conclusions in the shortest form to which the matter could be reduced.

A full and satisfactory system of notes upon the Divine Comedy would have to embrace the consideration of all that Dante himself knew, comprehending in effect all the knowledge of the Middle Ages in their most forward state. In addition to the general and particular history of Dante's own times, within its range must

be comprised Theology, Philosophy, Natural Science, Ancient History and Literature, Mythology, and whatever else was studied in the European Universities of the Thirteenth century. Such a commentary, not too diffuse, and yet doing equal justice to all the multifarious subjects to which it must refer, is still wanting, and might well occupy the years that should be devoted to it.

My best thanks and acknowledgments are due to many friends from whom I have received encouragement and assistance; and particularly to Mr. George Scharf, for the great zeal and kindness with which he has brought his well-known taste and ability to bear upon the illustration of this volume.

W. F. POLLOCK.

MONTAGU SQUARE, LONDON,
December, 1853.

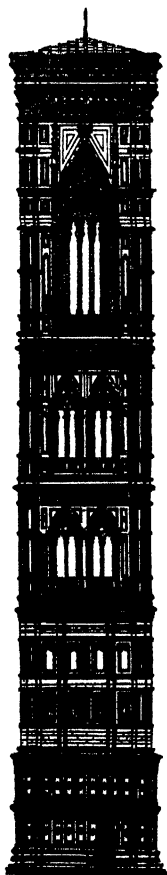


NOTICE OF DANTE

GIOVANNI VILLANI, FLORENTINE CHRONICLES BOOK IX CHAP 186

IN the year 1321, and in the month of July, died DANTE ALIGHIERI, of Florence, at the city of Ravenna, in Romagna, upon his return from an embassy to Venice, in the service of the Lords of Polenta, with whom he was living, and he was buried before the gate of the principal church with much honour, as became a great poet and philosopher. He died an exile from the

community of Florence, at about the age of fifty-six years. This Dante was a citizen of Florence, of an ancient and honourable family of the Porta san Piero, and my own neighbour; and his banishment from Florence was by



reason that when Charles of Valois of the house of France came into Florence, in the year 1301, and drove out the White party, Dante was one of the Chief Magistrates of our city, and of that party, although a Guelph. So that without any other crime he was expelled, and banished from Florence along with the Whites, and betook himself to study at Bologna, and afterwards at Paris and other places. He was a great scholar in every kind of knowledge, although a layman; he was a distinguished poet and philosopher, and an accomplished master of language both in prose and verse. For he was a very noble orator; and unrivalled in poetry; with the most perfect and beautiful style ever seen in our tongue, before his time or since. In his youth he composed the book of the *New Life of Love*; and afterwards, when in exile, he wrote twenty moral and amatory *Canzonets* of much excellence; and, beside others, he wrote three especially

noble *Epistles*—one to the government of Florence to complain of his banishment for no crime—the second to

the Emperor Henry, when he was at the siege of Brescia, to reprove him (and it was almost prophetic) for his delay — the third to the Italian Cardinals, upon the vacancy after the death of Pope Clement, urging them to agree in electing an Italian Pope. All these were in Latin, in an elevated style, of excellent opinions and judgment, and much commended by learned readers. He also wrote the *Comedy*; where in perfect rhymes, and with deep and subtle questions of morals, natural science, astronomy, philosophy, and theology; with new and beautiful figures, comparisons and poetical turns, he described and set forth in one hundred cantos or chapters the existence and condition of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, in that lofty manner with which acquaintance may be made by persons of intelligent mind. In this *Comedy*, with a poet's licence, he indulged himself in invectives and expressions of indignation, sometimes perhaps carried too far, but to which he may have been driven by his exile. He also wrote the *De Monarchiâ*, in which he treats of the offices of the Pope and Emperor; and he commenced a Commentary (called the *Convito*) upon fourteen of the above-mentioned *Canzonets*, in Italian, which was not completed owing to his death, except as to three. This, so far as it can be judged, is a beautiful, ingenious, and most important work, having all the adornment of fine style and of profound philosophical and astronomical arguments. Farther, he wrote a little treatise called the *De Vulgari Eloquentiâ*, of which he promised four books; but only two exist, probably in consequence of his premature death. In this he finds fault with all the forms of Italian in common use, in forcible and admirable

Latin, and with well chosen reasons. This Dante upon the strength of his knowledge was somewhat haughty, reserved, and disdainful : and like an ungracious philosopher could not well endure to converse with the ignorant : but on account of his many excellences, and of the wisdom and worth of such a citizen, it seemed to me that I was bound to give him perpetual remembrance in this our Chronicle ; considering also that the glorious works left by him in writing give to him a true testimony, and to our city an honourable reputation.

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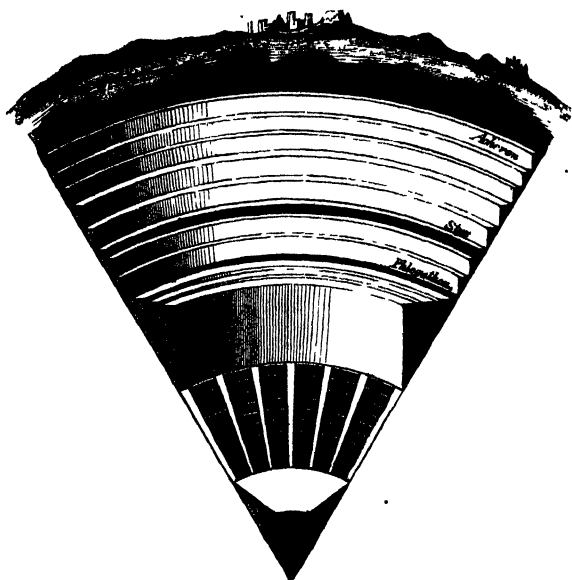
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ERRATA.

- Page 121, v. 148, *for* "gaol," *read* "goal."
.. 278, v. 101, *for* "Foseo," *read* "Fosco "
.. 384, v. 24, *for* "blessed," *read* "blest."
.. 437, v. 85, *for* "shine," *read* "shines."
.. 437, v. 86, *for* "they conduct," *read* "it conducts "
.. 471, v. 56, *before* "Aguglioné," *read* "of "

THE INFERNO.



THE INFERNO.

CANTO I.

INTRODUCTORY TO THE WHOLE POEM.—MORNING OF GOOD-FRIDAY, 1300.—THE THICK WOOD.—THE THREE BEASTS — VIRGIL.

HALF-WAY upon the journey of our life,¹
 I found myself within a gloomy wood,
 By reason that the path direct was lost.
 Ah ! what a hard thing is it to describe
 This savage wood, so tangled and so dread,

¹ In the year 1300, Dante was thirty-five years old, that is half way to seventy, the ordinary term of man's life. The date of the year and day is fixed by In. xxi. 112.

The very thinking on it renews fear ;
So bitter is it, death were little more :
But of the good to speak which there I found,
I will the rest of what I met with tell.
I cannot how I entered there recal ;
I was so full of slumber at the time
At which I had abandoned the true way :
But when I was arrived at the hill's foot,
At that part where the valley terminated,
Which with affright had pierced me to the heart,
Upwards I looked, and I its shoulders saw
Already clad with rays of that bright orb,
Which guides us faithfully on every way.
Then was the terror for a season stilled,
Which in the hollow of my heart had dwelt
Throughout the night which I in such grief passed :
And as a man who with exhausted breath
From forth the ocean to the shore escaped,
Turns round to gaze upon the perilous sea ;
So too my spirit, which still fled away,
With backward glances turned to view the track,
Which yet no person ever left alive.

After I had reposed my weary frame,
Over that desert place I took my way,
So that the firm foot² ever lower was :
And lo ! at the commencement of the slope,
A Leopard of light form and very quick,
And coated with a many-spotted hide :
Before my sight she never ceased to be ;
And even on my way so hindered me,
That many times I turned round to go back.
It was the season of the early morn,

² In walking on a level the foot upon the ground is always the lowest. It is otherwise in climbing a hill. Hence it is indicated that Dante is still on the plain, which in the next line begins to rise towards the hill.

The Sun was rising in the self-same stars³
 That were with him what time the Love Divine
 First into motion called those shining ones : 10
 And thus there was a ground for me to hope,
 In the gay raiment of that animal,
 The hour of day, and gracious time of year ;
 Yet not so but that filled me with affright
 The vision of a Lion⁴ which appeared :
 It seemed as if upon me he advanced
 With uplift head, and such a hungry rage
 As seemed to terrify the very air.
 And then a She-Wolf, that with all desires
 Appeared in her lean looking to be filled ; 20
 And many she has made live in misery.
 She laid upon me such a troublous load
 Of terror, which sprung from the sight of her,
 That I lost hope of mounting to the heights.
 And as a man on acquisition bent,
 Meeting a time which strips him of his all,
 To grief and tears abandons all his thoughts :
 Such one made me that never resting beast
 Before me always, so that step by step,
 She drove me back to where the sun was mute. 30

As I was sinking towards the lower place,
 Presented to me was before mine eyes
 One who appeared as by long silence dumb.⁵

³ The day was Good Friday—it was the spring of the year—and the sun was in Aries, the first sign of the zodiac, from which, according to ancient belief, it began its course at the creation. (Virg. Georg. ii. 366.)

⁴ The three beasts (probably suggested by Jeremiah v. 6) correspond with the three divisions of sins made in Canto XI., viz:—Sins of Incontinence—of Envy or Malice—and of Pride. Politically also the restless and parti-coloured leopard may represent Florence with its constant changes and varied factions—the lion may stand for France intriguing with the Papal Court for the election of Charles of Valois as Emperor, and for the establishment of French influence in Italy: and the wolf is Rome, or the black Guelf (or *wolf*) party.

⁵ Virgil may be said to have been silent during the long period of the middle ages, when his works were not studied.

Soon as I saw him in that wilderness :
 "Have pity on me," to him I exclaimed,
 "Whate'er thou art, or shade, or truly man."
 He answered: "Not a man, a man though once;
 Lombards my parents were on either side,
 And they were both by country Mantuans.
Sub Julio I was born, though it was late,⁶
 In good Augustus' reign I lived at Rome,
 In time of the deceiving and false gods.
 I was a Poet, and sang of that just
 Son of Anchises, who set forth from Troy,
 After proud Ilium was consumed by flames.
 But why dost thou back to such troubles turn?
 And dost not climb the mountain of delight
 The cause and first beginning of all joys?"

70

"Art thou then Virgil, and that fountain-head
 Which pours forth such an ample stream of speech?"⁸⁰
 I answered him with countenance abashed:
 "O thou the light and pride of other bards,
 Repay me the long study and great love,
 Which in thy volume oft have made me search;
 Thou my preceptor and my master art,
 Thou only he from whom I have derived
 The noble style whence I have honour won.
 Behold the beast that forces me to turn,
 Protect me from her, O illustrious Sage,
 For she makes tremble every pulse and vein."

80

"Needful it is to take another path,"
 He answered, when he saw me moved to tears,
 "If thou wouldst from this savage place escape.
 The creature that now makes thee cry for help,
 Will suffer none to pass along her way,

⁶ Born too late in the time of Julius Cæsar to belong to his age, and in fact belonging to the Augustan age.

But hinders them, aye, even to their death ;
 And has a nature so depraved and bad,
 That she can never sate her craving will,
 But after feeding hungereth the more.
 Many the beasts are, with whom she doth wed, 100
 And more there will be yet, until the Greyhound⁷
 Shall come, to make her in vexation die :
 And he will covet neither lands nor gold,
 But only wisdom, virtue, and esteem ;
 Between the Feltros⁸ shall his country lie :
 To that low Italy will he bring help
 For sake of which the maid Camilla died,
 And Turnus, Nisus, and Euryalus :
 He will pursue her through the cities all,
 Until at last he drives her back to Hell, 110
 From whence in hatred she was first despatched.
 Now for thy good revolving, I decide
 That thou shouldst follow, and be leader I,
 To guide thee hence through an eternal place ;
 Where thou wilt hear the shriekings of despair,
 And see the vexed souls of the former times,
 Where all are calling for the second death.
 Next thou shalt visit those who are content
 To be in fire, because they hope to come,
 Whenever it may be, among the blest : 120
 To whom if afterwards thou wish to mount,
 A Soul⁹ for this there will be worthier,
 To whom I shall consign thee when I part :

⁷ Can Grande della Scala (called Catulus Veronæ, or the Dog of Verona) a great Guibeline leader, and, from his name even, a natural antagonist of the Romish wolf. He was one of Dante's chief friends in exile. Pa. xvii. 76.

⁸ The town of Feltre in the province of Belluno, and Montefeltro in Romagna, which lie in opposite directions from Verona.

⁹ Beatrice, the glorified spirit of Folco Portinari's daughter, and the object of Dante's youthful and enduring love. In the Divine Comedy she represents Divine and Eternal Philosophy, as Virgil, the poetical historian of the foundation of the Roman Empire, signifies Human and Political Philosophy and Literature.

Seeing that Emperor who rules above,
Because I was rebellious to his laws,
Wills not that I his city should attain.
His empire is through all, and there he reigns ;
There is his capital, and lofty throne ;
O happy they, elected to that place ! ”

Then I to him : “ O Poet, I entreat
By that God whom it was not thine to know,
That I may this and greater evil fly,
Conduct me to the places thou hast said,
That I may have sight of Saint Peter’s gate,
And those whom thou describest as so sad.”
Then he advanced, and I behind him held.

CANTO II.

VIRGIL'S SUMMONS.—DANTE ADOPTS HIS GUIDANCE THROUGH
HELL AND PURGATORY.

THE day departed, and the darkened air
Relieved all living things upon the earth
From their fatigues, and I the one alone
Prepared myself to enter on the toil
Both of the journey, and the piteousness,
Which memory that fails not shall retrace.

O Muses, O high genius, aid me now !
O mind, describing that which I have seen,
Let thy nobility be now set forth.

Then I began: "O bard, that guidest me,
Look to my merit, if it will suffice,
Before thou trust me on this deep emprise.
Thou tellest how the sire of Silvius,¹
While yet corruptible, to the immortal
World did proceed, and sensibly was there :
Whence, that the Adversary of all ill
Was gracious, looking to the great result,
That was to spring from him, the who, and what,
Seems not unfitting to the man of thought ;

10

¹ The descent of *Æneas* into the infernal regions described by Virgil, *Æneid*, vi.

For he was of great Rome, and of its sway, 20
 Chosen as father in the highest heaven ;
 And both of these, to speak in verity,
 Were stablished for the sacred place's sake,
 Where the successor of great Peter sits.
 Upon this journey, whence thou givest him fame,
 Some things he learned, that were the origin
 Of his successes, and the Papal robe.
 That Vessel of Election² after went
 Thence to obtain a succour for that faith,
 Which is the opening of salvation's way. 30
 But why should I go? who should grant it me?
 I that am not Æneas, and not Paul ;
 Nor I, nor others, for it hold me fit.
 Therefore if I resign myself to go,
 I fear lest the adventure may be rash :
 Thou art wise, knowing more than I can reach."

And as a man who unwill's what he willed,
 Changing for fresh intentions his design,
 So that he quite from his beginning swerves ;
 Such one did I become in that dark tract : 40
 And in these thoughts I wasted the resolve,
 That was so quickly taken at the first.

" Rightly thy words if I have understood,"
 Answered the shadow of that noble one,
 " Thy spirit is by cowardice assailed ;
 Which oftentimes embarrasses a man,
 From noble enterprises turning him,
 As seeing false does animals, at dusk.
 Therefore that thou mayst rid thee of this fear,
 I will tell why I came, and what I knew 50
 From the first moment when I pitied thee.

² St. Paul—a "chosen vessel." (Acts ix. 15.)—"caught up to the third Heaven." (2 Cor. xii. 2.)

I was among those in the middle state,
When a fair blessed lady called to me,
One such that I besought her to command.
Her eyes were beaming brighter than the sun,
Sweetly and gently she began to me,
With voice angelical in her own tongue :
' O courteous spirit of the Mantuan,
Whose fame doth yet upon the earth endure,
And will endure as long as motion lasts, 60
One that is mine, but is not fortune's friend,
Is in the wilderness so much perplexed
Upon his way, that he has turned in fear.
And now I fear he is so far astray,
That I am late unto his succour raised,
By what in Heaven I have of him heard.
Arouse thee then, and with thine ornate speech,
And in whatever tends to his escape,
Assist him, so that I may be consoled.
I that commission thee am Beatrice, 70
Come from a place where I would fain return ;
Love, which now makes me speak, has brought me thence.
When I shall be in presence of my Lord,
To him thy praises will I often tell.'

"Then she was silent, and I thus began :
' O Lady, lone in excellence, through whom
The human race surpasses all within
That heaven³ which the smallest circles has,
Such pleasure I receive from thy behests,
Obedience on the instant seems but slow ; 80
Disclosing needs no farther thy intent.
But tell the reason why thou dost not shun
Descending hither to this central part,
From that clear space to which thou wouldst return.'

³ The heaven or sphere of the Moon, which is the smallest, and most immediately contains the earth. See *In.* vii. 64.

" 'Of this thing which thou longest thus to know,
 Briefly I will explain,' she answering said,
 ' Within this place why fear not I to come.
 Only it needs to be in dread of things,
 Which have the power to do others ill,
 But not of such, as are not terrible. 90
 Thanks be to Him, I am so framed by God
 That by your suffering I am not touched,
 Nor injures me the burning of these flames.
 A gentle Lady⁴ is in Heaven who weeps
 Over the trouble whither I send thee,
 So that she bends the stern decree above.
 She called to Lucia in her request,
 And said: " Now is thy faithful one in need
 Of thee, and I commend him unto thee." 100
 Lucia, the foe of all that cruel are,
 Advanced, and to the place where I was came;
 Where with the Rachel of old times I sat.
 She said: " O Beatrice, true praise of God,
 Dost thou not succour him who so loves thee,
 That for thee from the common herd he went?
 Dost thou not hear the woe of his complaint?
 Dost thou not see the death he grapples with
 Upon that stream⁵ whence has the sea no gain?"
 On earth no person ever was more swift
 'To seek advantage, or to fly from ill, 110
 Than I, upon conclusion of these words,
 Descended hither from my blessed seat,
 Confiding in that excellence of speech,
 Which honours thee, and those who have it heard.'

⁴ Generally taken as a personification of Divine Mercy, as Lucia is of Illuminating Grace. But see Pa. xxxii. 8 and 36, where the exact places of St. Lucia and Beatrice in heaven are shewn, in the presence of the Virgin Mary, who seems more properly to be here intended.

⁵ Dante was sinking towards the bank of Acheron, the first of the infernal rivers: and they do not fall into the sea. In. xiv. 112.

“After she had addressed me in this sort,
Weeping she turned on me her shining eyes,
Whereat more eager I became to go,
And came to thee according to her wish.
And took thee from the presence of that beast,
Which stopped thy quick way over the fair hill. 120
Why what is this? O wherefore dost thou stay?
Why dost thou nurse such cowardice of heart?
Why dost thou not take courage and be bold,
Because there are such blessed Ladies three
Who for thee in the courts of Heaven watch,
And that my words engage thee so much good?”

Then as the flowers, by the cold of night
Depressed and closed, when silvered by the sun,
Become erect, all open on their stem;
Such was I in my valour that had drooped, 130
And such good courage rushed into my heart,
That I began, as one emancipated:
“How gracious she, that has my succour been,
And courteous thou, that didst so quick obey
The truthful words which she to thee addressed!
Thou hast with ardour so possessed my heart
To venture onwards, by thine eloquence,
That to the first decision I return.
Proceed we now, we both have but one wish:
Thou art my guide, my master, and my lord.” 140

So I addressed him, and as he advanced,
I entered by the deep and wooded path.



CANTO III.

THE GATE OF HELL—THE NEUTRAIS—ACHERON—CHARON

THROUGH ME THE WAY LIES TO THE LAND OF WOE,
THROUGH ME THE WAY LIES TO ETERNAL GRIEF,
THROUGH ME THE WAY LIES TO THE FALLEN RACE.
JUSTICE INSPIRED MY GREAT ARCHITECT:
I WAS ERECTED BY THE POWER DIVINE,
BY HIGHEST WISDOM, AND BY PRIMAL LOVE
BEFORE ME WERE NOT ANY THINGS CREATE,
EXCEPT ETERNAL, AND I AM ETERNAL:
ALL HOPE ABANDON, YE THAT ENTER HERE.

THESE sentences in dusky colouring
Over a gate-way I could see inscribed;
Then I: "O Master, their import is grave."
He then, as one experienced, to me:

“ Here must thou leave behind thee all distrust ;
All cowardice must here become extinct.
Come to the place we are, in which I said
That thou wouldst see the people sorrowful,
To whom are lost the good gifts of the mind : ”
And placing then within his hand my own
With cheerful countenance, to comfort me, 20
He took me in among the hidden things.

Here lamentations, groanings, and loud cries
Resounded through the starless atmosphere,
Whereat at the beginning I shed tears.
Languages divers, horrible discourse,
Accents of wrath, and mutterings of woe,
Hoarse and sharp voices, sounds of striking hands,
An uproar made, which circled in a round
For ever in that air unchanging dark,
As does the sand what time a whirlwind blows. 30
Then I, whose mind was rapt in ignorance,
Said : “ O my Master, what is this I hear ?
And who are these who seem thus whelmed by grief ? ”
Then he to me : “ This miserable state
Possesses the distressful souls of those,
Who lived without or infamy or praise.
Are mingled with this wretched company
Some of the angels who did not rebel,
Nor were to God true, but were for themselves : 40
Heaven cast them out, its beauty not to mar,
Nor would receive them the profound of Hell,
Lest from them should the wicked have some boast.”¹

Then I : “ O Master, what is grievous thus
Upon them, making them to wail so sore ? ”

¹ As they would then find themselves, who had actually committed great crimes, after all, in no worse punishment than these whose only offence was indifference and cowardice.

He answered : " I will tell thee in brief space.
All these are they which have no hope of death,
And so degraded is their blinded life,
That they are envious of all other states :
Mention of them the world will not allow,
Mercy and Justice hold them in contempt,
Let us not speak of them, but look and pass."

As then I looked around, I saw a flag,
That whirling moved with such rapidity
It seemed intolerant of any rest ;
And followed after it so long a train
Of people, that I scarcely had believed
That death so many ever had destroyed.
As soon as any I could recognise,
I looked, and I beheld the shade of him²
Who dastardlike the great refusal made.

I understood soon, and was well assured,
This was the company of those poor knaves,
To God displeasing, and His enemies :
And these unfortunates who never lived,
Were naked, and perpetually stung
By hornets and by wasps that swarmed around.
They had their faces wetted by their blood,
Which mingled with their tears, and at their feet
Was gathered up by loathsome creeping-things.

Next, when to further survey I betook,
People I saw on a great river's bank ;
Wherefore I said : " O Master, tell me now

² Celestine 5th, who was frightened or cajoled by his successor Boniface 8th, into resigning the Papacy, after holding it from July to December, 1294, during which time he showed an entire want of capacity, and was imprisoned by Boniface for the short remainder of his life. He had been a hermit of much reputed sanctity, and was canonized in 1318 as San Pietro di Morrone.

That I may know who these are, and what law
Obliges them to cross thus rapidly,
As by the feeble light I can discern.”
He then to me: “This thing will plain appear,
As soon as we our footsteps shall implant
Upon the mournful shore of Acheron.”
Thereon, with modest and submissive looks,
Fearing lest my discourse should trouble him,
From speech I held until we reached the stream.

And lo! towards us coming in a boat
An old man with his ancient locks all white,
Crying out: “Woe to you, ye wicked souls!
Hope not that Heaven ye will ever see.
I come to bear you to the other shore,
Amid eternal darkness, heat, and cold.
And thou, who standest there, a living soul,
Asunder get thee from these who are dead.”
But when he saw that I departed not,
He spoke: “By other ways, by other ports,
That strand thou mayst attain, but not by this:
To carry thee there needs a lighter³ bark.”
Then spoke my guide: “O Charon, vex thee not,
Thus is it willed there, where will come to pass
All that is willed, and further ask not thou.”

Thenceforth were motionless the shaggy cheeks
Of that discoloured lagoon's ferryman,
Who round about his eyes had wheels of flame:
But all those naked and exhausted souls
Changed colour, and together gnashed their teeth,
The instant that they heard his frightful words.
They blasphemed God, and their own parentage,
The human race, the place, the time, the seed
Of their own lineage, and of their birth.

³ The angel's bark. Pg. ii. 40.

Then altogether they betook themselves,
With loud lamentings, to the dreadful bank,
That waits for every man who fears not God.
The demon Charon, with his coal-hot eyes
Makes signal to them, and collects the whole; 110
Whoever lingers with his oar he strikes.
As when the leaves in autumn take their flight,
Each following the rest, until the bough
Has rendered all its spoils up to the earth;
The evil seed of Adam in like sort,
One by one cast themselves from off that bank,
At signals, like a bird at its recall.⁴
And so they went across the waters dark,
Yet ere they landed on the other side,
Again on this side gathered a fresh crowd. 120

“My son,” thus said the Master courteous,
“They who have left life in the wrath of God,
Must all assemble here from every land:
And ever ready are to cross the stream,
For Divine Justice does so spur them on,
That apprehension to desire is turned.
But never any good soul crosses here;
Therefore, if Charon did of thee complain,
Thou mayst conceive the meaning of his words.”

When this was finished, all the murky land 130
Trembled so violently, that with fear
Remembrance of it bathes me in a sweat.
The mournful earth gave out a storm of wind,
Which forth from it flashed lightning crimson-red,
And all sensation in me overwhelmed;
Then fell I like a man by slumber seized.

⁴ In falconry.

CANTO IV.

LIMBO, OR THE FIRST CIRCLE.—THE DESCENT OF CHRIST.—THE
GREAT POETS.—CERTAIN ILLUSTRIOUS PAGANS.

BROKE through the slumber deep that held my brain
A heavy thunder, and I started up,
Like to a man by violence awaked.
I turned my rested eyes on every side,
Standing erect, and looking earnestly,
To gain intelligence of where I was :
And true it is I found me on the brink
Of the valley dolorous of the Abyss,
Which gathers the deep sound of countless woes.
It was obscure, profound, and vaporous, 10
So that by straining to the depth the sight
I could not in it anything discern.

Descending as we went in this dark world,
The Poet, pale as death his face, began :
“I will go first, and thou shalt follow me.”
Then I, who from his visage took alarm,
Said : “How shall I go, if thou art afraid,
Thou that art wont to cheer me in my doubts?”
He then to me : “The anguish of the race
Here dwelling, on my countenance depicts 20
This pity which thou dost mistake for fear;
Let us proceed ; so prompts the length of way.”

Thus he advanced, and thus he led me in
To the first circle, which surrounds the Abyss :
And here, as was reported by the ear,
There were no lamentations ; only sighs
Which made the eternal atmosphere to throb.
And this came from the sorrow without pains,
Felt by the crowds that numerous were and large,
Of children, and of women, and of men. 30

Spoke the good Master: "Dost thou not demand
What are these souls, whom thou dost now behold?
Yet thou shouldst know, before we further go ;
These have not sinned ; and if they merit have
'Twas not sufficient without Baptism,
The portal of the faith in which ye trust :
And if they lived before the time of Christ
They did not pay due reverence to God ;
And I myself am one of those placed here.
For these defects, and for no other crime, 40
We are undone, and only thus much grieved
That we exist in longing without hope."

When this I learned, deep grief possessed my heart,
Because of many persons of great worth,
Who as I knew must in this limbo float.
"Tell me, O Master mine, O tell my Lord,"
I thus began, in wish to be assured
Of that Faith, which all error overthrows,
"Goes any forth hence, by his own desert,
Or through Another, so that he is blest ?" 50

Then he, my covert meaning understood,
Said : "I was newly come to this estate,
When here I saw arrive a Mighty One,
Crowned with the evidence of victory.
The soul of our first parent he drew hence ;

Of his son Abel ; also that of Noah ;
Moses the lawgiver ; obedient
Abram the patriarch ; and David king ;
And Israel with his father and his sons ;
And Rachel for whose sake he served so long ; 60
With many others whom he rendered blest.
And understand thou, that before this time,
Salvation was not for the souls of men."

We ceased not to advance, the while he spoke,
But through the thicket ever onwards went,—
I mean the thicket of close-serried souls.
We had not long been going on our way,
Down from the highest part, when shone a light
Which in a hemisphere repelled the dark.
We by some little distance were removed, 70
Yet not so far but that I partly saw
That honourable persons held that place.

"O thou that honourest all skill and art,
Who may these be, in such great honour had,
That they are thus distinguished from the rest ?"
Then he to me : "The honourable fame
Which sounds their praises in your world above,
From heaven's favour this advance has won."

In the meanwhile I heard a voice proclaim :
"Give honour to the greatest of the poets, 80
Whose shade that had departed is returned."
Soon as the voice was silent, and had ceased,
Approaching us I saw four noble shades,
Of countenance that shewed nor grief nor joy ;
And my good Master, thus commencing, spoke :
"Behold him with the falchion in his hand,
Who comes before the three, as if their lord,
That one is Homer, poet sovereign ;

Horace, the satirist, advances next;
Ovid is third, and Lucan is the last : 90
And because each of them with me enjoys
The name which they with one voice all pronounced,
They honour me, and doing so, do well."
And thus I saw united the grand school
Of him the master of the lofty song,
Who like an eagle soars above the rest.
Together after they had talked awhile,
To me they turned with courteous salute,
And thereupon my Master something smiled.
Then they went on, and greater honour shewed ; 100
Me they admitted of their company,
And I was sixth of those great intellects.

Thus we proceeded towards that lighted space,
Discoursing matters, best in silence left,
As was the speaking them where then I was.

The base of a grand castle we approached,
That seven times was circled with high walls,
And guarded round about by a fair moat.
This we passed over, as if on dry ground ;
By seven gateways¹ entered with the Sages, 110
And on a meadow of fresh verdure came.
Here there were people with deep serious eyes,
And they had looks of awful dignity,
Seldom discoursed they, and in accents sweet.

Here we withdrew ourselves upon one side
Within a luminous, high, and open space,
So that at large we could survey the whole. .

¹ The seven walls and gates may indicate the seven cardinal virtues—the bulwarks of morality in the pagan world : or they may represent the seven sciences of the *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*, which formed the educational course of the middle ages : viz. Logic, Grammar, Rhetoric ; and Music, Geometry, Arithmetic, Astronomy.

And so before me, on the enamel green,
 Then were displayed to me such noble shades
 That in beholding them I felt exalted. 120
 I saw Electra² with large company,
 'Mongst whom I Hector and Æneas knew,
 Cæsar in armour with his falcon eye ;
 Camilla, too, and Penthesilea,
 And king Latinus on the other side,
 Who with Lavinia, his daughter, sat.
 And I saw Brutus, he that Tarquin chased ;
 Lucretia, Julia, Marcia, Cornelia
 I saw, and Saladin alone, apart.
 Then, when I something upwards threw my glance, 130
 I saw the Master³ of all men that know,
 Sitting among the philosophic race ;
 They all admired, and gave him honour due.
 Plato and Socrates I also saw,
 Who next to him before the others stood ;
 Democritus, who builds the world by chance ;
 Thales, Diogenes, and Anaxagoras,
 Zeno, Empedocles, and Heraclitus :
 I saw that writer good on qualities,
 I mean Dioscorides ;⁴ I Orpheus saw, 140
 Tully and Livy, moral Seneca,
 Geometrician Euclid, Ptolemy,⁵
 Galen, Hippocrates, and Avicenna,⁶
 Averroës,⁷ who wrote the comment great.

² Daughter of Atlas, and mother of Dardanus, the founder of Troy, and progenitor of the Romans. According to G. Villani (i. 7), the Florentine historian, she married another Atlas, who came to Europe after the dispersion of Babel, and founded Fiesole, the parent of Florence, which was the first city built in Europe.

³ Aristotle.

⁴ A physician of Cilicia in the first century ; in his great work on the *Materia Medica* the qualities of a large number of substances are described.

⁵ The geographer and astronomer.

⁶ Or Ebn Sina, the celebrated Arabian philosopher and physician ; b. 980, d. 1036.

⁷ Or Ebn Roshd, of Cordova, also an Arabian philosopher and physician, and a famous commentator on Aristotle ; b. 1149, d. 1198.

Of all of these I cannot treat in full,
The length of subject so pursuing me,
That words oft fail me to describe the things.
To two diminished was the band of six :
Another way my learned Master led
Forth from the quiet to the throbbing air ;
And to a part I came where shines no light.

1511



CANTO V.

THE SECOND CIRCLE — MINOS — THE DRIVING BLAST — THE
SINNERS IN LOVE — FRANCESCA AND PAOLO

From the first circle I departed thus
On to the second, which includes less space,
And by so much, more shriek-compelling woe.
There Minos stands all horrible and frowns :
He at the entrance the offences tries :
Hears and gives judgment as he wreathes himself.
I say that when the evil-fated soul
Before him comes, all stands at once confessed ;
And this examiner of wickedness,
Perceives what part of Hell for it is meet,
And girds him with his tail as many times
As grades below he wills it should be placed.

Always before him stands a multitude,
 And each one, in his turn, for judgment comes ;
 They plead, and hear their doom; then are cast down.

“ O thou, who comest to this sad abode,”
 Said Minos to me, when he me beheld,
 Leaving the business of his awful post,
 “ Beware of entering, and in whom thou trustest,
 Nor let the broadness of the gate deceive.” 20
 Then spoke my guide to him: “ Why criest thou ?
 Hinder not thou his progress destinied,
 He wills it there, where all is possible
 That can be willed ; no further question make.”

Already did begin the sorrowing sounds
 To make them heard, for now I had arrived
 Where much complaining struck upon the ear.
 I came into a place deprived of light
 And roaring as the sea does in a storm,
 When it is fought with by opposing winds. 30
 The infernal whirlwind which has never rest
 Snatches the spirits in its fierce career ;
 Turning and bruising them, it tortures them.
 When they arrived upon the precipice,
 Then were there shrieks and outcries and laments ;
 They cursed the power of divinity.
 I understood that to this punishment
 Were damned those sinners in the carnal flesh,
 Who to desire ~~their~~ reason had abased.
 And as the starlings on their wings are borne, 40
 In time of winter, in a full broad flight,
 So did this blast the evil spirits bear,
 Above, below, on this side and on that.
 No hope to them can ever comfort bring,
 Either of ~~rest~~ or lesser punishment ;
 And as the cranes fly, singing forth their cries,

Forming themselves a long file in the air,
 So saw I come, ejaculating sobs,
 The shadows carried on this gust of woe.

Then said I, "Master, tell me who are these
 Whom the dark blast so sorely castigates?"
 "The first of these of whom intelligence
 Thou wouldst obtain," he then to me thus spoke,
 "Was empress over many languages;
 So prone she was to vicious luxury,
 That lust was licensed by her very laws,¹
 To sink the shame at which she had arrived:
 This is Semiramis, of whom we read
 That she succeeded Ninus, was his wife,
 And held the country which the Soldan rules.
 The next is she² who killed herself for love,
 And with Sichæus' ashes broke her faith;
 Luxurious Cleopatra comes the next."
 I saw that Helen for whom so much crime
 Was so long worked: I great Achilles saw,
 Who perished at the last for sake of love.³
 Paris I saw, and Tristram;⁴ thousands more
 He shewed, and pointed out to me by name,
 Whom love from life on earth did separate.
 After my learned teacher I had heard
 These knights of old and ladies tell by name,
 Pity subdued me, and I was amazed.

Then I spoke out; "O Poet! I could wish
 To speak to those two who together come,

¹ Paulus Orosius, the Christian historian, writing of Semiramis, has this passage (i. 4):—"Privatam ignominiam publico scelere obtexit. Precepit enim ut . . . cuique libitum esset, liberum fieret." She proclaimed universal licence, to make the shame of her own life the less remarkable.

² Dido.

³ Achilles was shot at his bridal with Polyxena.

⁴ In the Romance of Arthur—the lover of Queen Markand slain by Mark, king of Cornwall, her husband.

And are so swiftly borne upon the wind."
 Then he to me : "Thou wilt mark when they draw
 More near to us, and them thou mayst invoke
 By the love moving them, and they will come."
 Soon as the whirlwind turned to us their course,
 I raised my voice : " O persecuted souls,
 Come and speak with us, if none else forbids."
 Like turtle doves who by affection called,
 With open steady wings to their loved nest
 Wheel through the air as wafted by their wish,
 These issued from the throng where Dido was,
 To come to us through that malignant air:
 Such power had the voice of kindness.

" O thou benignant and most gracious one,
 Who through this grey air goest visiting,
 We⁵ who have dyed the earth with bloody stains,
 If He who rules the world were friend to us,
 Him would we pray to grant thee happiness,
 For that thou pitiest our hapless fate.
 Of what it pleases thee to hear and speak
 We will both hear, and with thee converse hold,
 While the great wind, as now, shall silent be.
 The country lies, which gave to me my birth,
 On the sea-border where the Po descends,
 With all his tributaries to find rest.

⁵ These are, Francesca (daughter of Guido da Polenta, Lord of Ravenna), and Paolo, (son of Malatesta, Lord of Rimini,) her husband's brother. They were surprised together, slain by the husband, and buried in the same grave. This happened in 1288. A wretched marriage had been contrived by a cruel deceit. After long enmity Polenta and Malatesta wished to establish peace by an alliance between their families. Gian Ciotto (or John the Lame) one of the sons of Malatesta, a deformed man and of repulsive appearance, was for political reasons selected by the contracting parties as the future husband of Francesca. But the probability of her refusing him was foreseen, and it was arranged that the lady should be wooed by his handsome and accomplished brother Paolo, who was introduced as the expected suitor, and accepted by her. At the last, the odious Ciotto was substituted for him; but Francesca's love for Paolo, thus innocently commenced, remained.

Love, which soon occupies a tender heart,
 Laid hold on this one by the beauteous form
 Torn from me so, that I resent it still.
 Love, who permits no loved one not to love,
 Laid hold on me because I so pleased him
 'That as thou seest, still he leaves me not.
 Love led us both on to the one same death,
 And Caina⁶ waits for him who spilt our life."

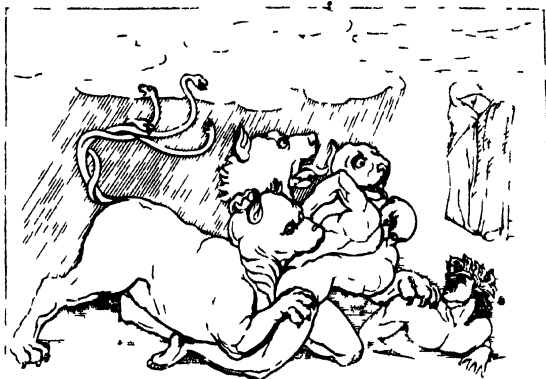
Such were the words that reached us from those two,
 And as I heard this from those tortured souls,
 I bowed my face, and held it downward long,
 Until the Poet spoke; "What are thy thoughts?"
 And as I answered, I began: "Alas!
 How many tender thoughts, how much desire
 Have brought them to this miserable pass!"
 Then I returned to them and spoke again,
 Beginning, "O Francesca, thy great woes
 Have made me in all grief and pity weep:
 But tell me, in the season of sweet sighs,
 At what, and in what way love granted you,
 To understand your wishes dubious?"
 Then she to me, "There is no greater grief
 Than the remembering of a happy time
 In misery;⁷ and this, thy teacher knows:
 But if to learn the root original
 Of this our love, thou hast so great desire,
 I will be like to one who sobs and speaks.
 For our pleasure we were one day reading
 Of Lancelot," and how love held him fast:

⁶ The place for brother-murderers. In. xxxii. 58.

⁷ Almost exactly from the Latin of Boethius: "In omni adversitate fortuna, infelicissimum genus est infortunii fuisse felicem et non esse." De Consolatione. l. ii. pr. 4.

⁸ One of the Knights of the Round Table, and the lover of Queen Guinevere in the Romance of Lancelot; in a certain chapter of which Sir Galahad persuades the Queen to kiss Sir Lancelot. (Page vi, 15.)

We were alone, and free from all distrust,
And many times our eyes were made to meet 130
By that perusal, and our cheeks turned pale ;
But it was one place only vanquished us ;
For as we read of the desired smile
And how by such a lover it was kissed ;
He who may never part from me again
Trembling all over, kissed me on the mouth :
A Galahad the book was and its writer :
And for that day we read in it no more.”
While the one spirit thus delivered her,
The other cried in such wise, that for pity 140
I sank within, as if about to die :
And even as a dead corpse falls, I fell.



CANTO VI.

THE THIRD CIRCLE — THE ETERNAL HAIL — THE GLUTTONOUS —
CIACCO — FLORENCE — THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

WHEN sense came back to me, which had retreated
Before the anguish of those kinsfolk twain,
Who had in sorrow all confounded me ;
Fresh torments and fresh persons tormented
I saw around, wherever I advanced,
Wherever turned, or ever threw mine eyes.
I was in the third circle, of the rain
Eternal, cold, and grievous, and accurséd ;
Its law and quality are never changed,
Great hailstones, and discoloured rain, and snow ¹⁰
Through the dark atmosphere come rushing down,
And the earth stinks, that takes it to itself.

Cerberus, cruel and strange-shapen beast,
With triple throat is barking like a dog,
Over the people that are whelméd here.
His eyes are red, and black his greasy mane ;
His belly large ; with talons on his paws ;
He rends and tears the spirits, tossing them ;
The heavy shower makes them howl like dogs ;
Under one side the other they protect,
With frequent shift, these outcasts impious.

Now ran at us, the great worm Cerberus,
His mouth wide open, and he shewed his fangs ;
There was no limb of him that did not quake.
And my conductor, spread his hands apart,
Collected earth, and with his grasp full charged,
Flung it within that gullet ravenous :
As is a dog that hungers when he barks,
And after he has ate his food is still,
Thinking and striving only to gorge this ;
In such sort did the filthy jaws behave
Of Cerberus the demon, who so stuns
The souls as makes them wish that they were deaf.

Now passed we over on the shades, beat down
By that hard rain, and planted our footsteps
Upon their empty forms, that seemed like men.
They all lay without rising on the ground
But one, who raised himself to sit, so soon
As he observed us passing over him.
“O thou, that art conducted through this Hell,”
He said, “consider if thou knowest me,
For thou wast born before I was undone.”
Then I to him : “The anguish which thou hast,
Haply has chased thee from my memory,
So that it seems I never thee beheld :
But tell me who thou art, that to this sad

Place art remitted, and pains so ordained
That others may be greater, sharper none."

.Then he to me: "Thy city, which is full
Of hatred, so that measure it exceeds,
Held me within her, in the life serene:
Ye, townsmen mine, did call me Ciacco.¹
For my pernicious sin of gluttony
I am, thou seest, harassed by this rain.
And I am not the only wretched soul,
For all these suffer the like punishment
For the like fault;" and then he said no more.

Answer I made: "Ciacco, thy sad case
So weighs on me, that it invites to tears.
But say, if known to thee, to what will come
The citizens of that divided state;
If any there are just; and tell the cause
Why by such discord it has been attacked."
Then he to me said: "After long disputes"

¹ *Ciacco* means hog; it is also an abbreviation of *Jacopo*, which may have been the Christian name of this Florentine. His family name has not been preserved. He figures (along with Filippo Argenti and Corso Donati) in one of the stories of the *Decameron* (ix. 8) as an amusing but worthless person, extremely fond of good eating, and making it his business to get asked to the tables of the rich.

² In 1300 arose at Pistoia a feud between two branches of the Cancellieri family, one of which was named the White (after an ancestress called Bianca), and the other, for the sake of distinction, the Black. It divided the whole town, and spread to other places. In Florence especially, at that time almost a purely Guelf city, the new factions were furiously taken up. The ancient family of the Donati, with Corso at their head, espoused the quarrel of the Blacks: while the Cerchi, a new race, lately settled in Florence, and coming from the country district of Val di Nievole, headed the Whites, thence called the country party (*parte selvaggia*). In February, 1301, the chiefs of both parties were banished, Dante being then one of the priors, or chief magistrates of the city. But the Whites contrived to return from banishment, and in June of the same year they procured the banishment of the remaining Blacks. Charles of Valois, the brother of Philip the Fair, of France, was now invited by Pope Boniface the 8th (whose assistance had been previously sought by the Blacks) to undertake the office of peace-maker. He began with fair promises to both sides, but soon brought an armed force into the city,

They will to blood come, and the country party
 Will chase the other with great violence.
 And then it must be, that this side shall fall
 Within three years, and that the other rise
 By help of one who somehow temporiseth.
 This party long will hold its front on high, 70
 Keeping the others down with heavy weight,
 However they complain of it and chafe.
 There are two just men,³ but they are not heard;
 And Pride, and Avarice, and Hatred, are
 The three sparks which have so inflamed their hearts."

Here he an ending made of his sad tones,
 And I to him: "Instruct me further now
 And grant the favour of yet more discourse.
 Tegghio and Farinata, full of worth,
 Arrigo, Rusticucci, Mosca' too, 80
 And others who endeavoured to do good,
 Say where are they, and suffer me to know them,
 For a great wish possesses me to learn
 If heaven blesses them, or hell torments."
 Then he: "They are among the blackest souls;
 Their other crimes have sunk them to the pit:
 If thou descend so low them thou mayst see.
 But when thou art to the sweet world returned,
 I pray thee, others to remind of me;
 No more I speak nor further answer give." 90

Then his straight eyes he twisted all askance,
 Regarded me a while, then dropped his head,

and the Blacks were permitted to enter Florence, and to sack and destroy the houses of the White party, most of whom, including Dante himself, (then absent on an embassy to Rome), were banished in April, 1302, (that is, within three years from the date of the prediction put into Ciacco's mouth,) and the permanent ascendancy of the Blacks was established.

³ Possibly Dante himself and his friend Guido Cavalcanti. •

⁴ Arrigo is not elsewhere mentioned: for the others see *In.* xvi. 41; x. 32; xvi. 44; xxviii. 106.

And to the level of that blind crew sank.
Then said my guide to me : " No more he wakes
On this side of the angel trumpet's sound,
When will arrive the Judge his enemy.
Each to his drear grave will again return,
And will resume his flesh and outward form,
And will hear that, which shall for ever ring."

So we passed over on that ugly mass 100
Of spirits, and the rain, with tardy steps,
Something conversing of the future life.
And then I said : " O Master, will these pains
After their sentence great, be multiplied
Or be diminished, or as pungent be ? "
Then he to me : " Unto thy Science⁵ turn,
Which says, that the more perfect is the thing
The more it will or pain or pleasure feel :
And thus, although this miserable race
To true perfection never can attain, 110
Yet will they then expect it more than now."

We took a circuit round upon the bank,
Conversing more, of which I nothing tell ;
And came to that place where the way descends :
Here we found Plutus the great enemy.

⁵ The Aristotelian philosophy. The immediate allusion may be to the *Metaphysics*, iv. 16. St. Augustine has a passage asserting that after the resurrection the joys of the blessed and the pains of the damned will be increased.

CANTO VII.

THE FOURTH CIRCLE.—PLUTUS.—THE INFERNAL WHIRLPOOL —
THE AVARICIOUS AND PRODIGAL.—FORTUNE —STYX —THE
FIFTH CIRCLE.—THE SULLEN AND ANGRY

*"PAË Satan, papé Satan, aleppe!"*¹

Broke forth thus Plutus, with a choking voice.

And then that learned one, who all things knew,

Said to restore me : " Let not trouble thee

This terror, for no power that he has

Can hinder thee from going down this steep."

"Then he turned round to that inflated face,

And said : " Be silent, thou accurséd wolf ;

Consume thyself within with thine own rage.

Not without cause we journey to the deeps ;

Above it is resolved, where Michael

The vengeance for the proud rebellion worked."

10

Then as a ship's sails that are swelled with wind,

Fall all involved, if ever snaps the mast,

So sank to earth this cruel-hearted beast.

Thus we proceeded to the fourth descent,

Advancing onwards to the mournful bank

¹ May be rendered, " Ho Satan ! Ho Satan ! my alpha or chief !" — an exclamation of alarm and warning at the approach of Virgil and Dante, uttered by Plutus, the heathen genius of riches, who presides over the punishment of the avaricious and prodigal, as did Cerberus over that of the gluttonous.

Which all the ills of all the world confines.
Ah ! Justice of the Lord ! which so heaps up
New pains and torments, such as I have seen,
And why does our offence expend them thus ?

20

As does a wave upon Charybdis' pool,
That breaks in clashing with another wave ;
So here, it seemed, the people circled round.
Here I saw more than I had seen before,
On this side, and on that, with howlings loud,
Who rolled huge weights, by pushing with their breasts :
Meeting, they struck each other ; afterwards,
They all faced round, returning back again,
Crying : " Why holdest ? Why dost throw away ? " 30
So in that murky round they ever went,
In each direction, to the other side ;
And still thus sang that burthen of reproach.
Turned each one, as the other side was gained,
Through half the circle, for another joust.

30

Then I, who felt my heart to pity stirred,
Said : " O, my Master, show me now, I pray,
What men are these, and if they all were priests,
These, with the shaven crowns, upon the left ? "
Then he to me : " All these were slant-sighted 40
In their souls' vision, in the former life ;
So that they nothing in just measure spent.
The howling voices clearly this proclaim,
When to the two points of the course they come,
Where the opposing vice encounters them.
But those were priests, who have no covering
Of hair on head, and cardinals and popes,
In whom did avarice its power work."

40

Then I : " O, Master, of so many such
There must be some whom I could recognise,

50

Who by this kind of evil were deformed.”
Then he to me : “Thou dost a vain thought nurse ;
The sordid life which thus degraded them
Condemns them now to dark obscurity,
Ever will these to the two joustings come ;
One set will rise from out their sepulchres
With close shut fists, the others with shorn hair,
Ill keeping, and ill spending, the fair world
Has lost to them, and brought them to this shock,
Which what it is no language needs describe. ⁶⁰
Thou mayst, my son, now see how short the joy
Of the good things that are in Fortune’s gift,
For which the human race such struggle makes.
And all the gold that is beneath the moon,
Or ever was, of all these wearied souls,
For even one, could never buy repose.”

Then said I : “Master, tell me yet again :
This Fortune, of whom thou hast mention made,
What is she, that the world’s good so can wield ? ”
Then he to me said : “O, ye simple ones, ⁷⁰
What ignorance is this, that injures you !
But now I would that all should learn my words.
He whose intelligence transcendeth all,
Laid out the heavens and gave them ministers,²
So that each part upon each part should shine,
The brightness equally distributing.
So likewise for the splendours of the earth
Ordains he a chief minister and guide,
To shift from time to time the fickle good
From race to race, and among families, ⁸⁰
Beyond the weak control of human sense.

² The Creator has appointed the “first created ones” or Angels to the charge of guiding the revolutions of the heavenly spheres ; their grades corresponding in number with the nine moving spheres of the Ptolemaic and Scholastic astronomy (see Pa. xxviii). Fortune is here assimilated to these Powers, but has charge of the affairs of men.

Thus rules one nation, while another sinks,
As following the course of her decree,
Which lies deep hidden, like the snake in grass.
Your wisdom nothing can with her compare,
For she foresees, deliberates, and rules
Her kingdom, as the other Powers theirs.
Her permutations no repose admit,
Necessity obliges her to speed :
So thick they come, one dogs the others close. 90
And this is she who is so much reviled
By those who ought the most to give her praise,
Giving her wrongful blame and evil words.
But she is blest, and nothing hears of this ;
Glad with the other first created ones,
She rolls her sphere, delighted in her joy.
Descend we now to what more pity claims :
Already setting are the stars, which rose
As we went forth, and we must not delay."

We crossed the circle to the other bank 100
Where rose a spring which bubbled forth, and flowed
In a deep channel which led down from it :
Darker than perse-colour³ the water was,
And we, in company with that black stream,
Entered, descending by a rugged way.
A marsh is formed, which has the name of Styx,
By this sad river, when it has descended
Down to the foot of its malign dark banks.

Then I, who stood intent and wondering,
Saw people that were mixed in that slough 110
All naked and of tortured countenance.
These struck each other, not with hands alone,

³ "Perse" is a purple-black, but the black is the strongest. So defined by Dante in his "Convito," iv. 20. It is used by Chaucer in the "Canterbury Tales," when describing the Doctor of Physic's dress,

But with the head, and with the breast and feet,
 And tore each other piecemeal with their teeth.
 Spoke the good Master : " Here, my son, thou seest
 The souls of those whom anger overcame ;
 And further, I would have thee well to know
 That 'neath the water there are some who sigh
 And make this water bubble at the top,
 As the eye shows thee casting it around." 120

Then spoke those plunged in mire : " We were morose
 In the pure air which in the sun is glad,
 Within us carrying a sullen fume ;
 Now are we sad here in this darksome slime."

This lay came thickly gurgling out of throats,
 That could articulate no perfect words.
 Then took we round that sink of loathsomeness
 A vast sweep 'twixt the dry bank and the sludge,
 With eyes still turned upon the mud-engulfed ;⁴
 And came at length unto a tower's foot. 130

⁴ Stifling in mud was one of the capital punishments of the ancient Germans for offences of cowardice and inaction. Tacitus de Mor. c. 12.

In the preceding circles have been seen the punishment of the Deadly Sins of *Luxuria*, *Gula*, and *Avaritia* : in this the sins of *Ira* and *Accidia* are punished together. It is difficult to find an exact English equivalent for the latter word. Chaucer, in the "Parson's Tale," calls it simply *Accidie* or *Sloth*. Peccham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Canon of Lyons in the 13th century, describes *Accidia* as "a weariness of spiritual good, so that a man delights not in God, nor in divine praises, whence follow laziness, pusillanimity, despair, and the like." (Constitution of 1279.)

CANTO VIII.

PHLEGYAS.—FILIPPO ARGENTI.—THE SIXTH CIRCLE.—THE
BURNING CITY OF DIS.—THE FALLEN ANGELS.

CONTINUING my tale, as soon as we
At foot of that high tower were arrived,
Our eyes were upwards to its top attracted
By two flames which we saw in station there ;
And from afar, another made a signal,
So far, as hardly could the eye discern.¹
And to the Sea² of all lore as I turned,
I said : “ What says this, and what answer gives
That other fire ? Who are they, that make it ? ”
Then he to me : “ Upon the filthy waves
Thou mayst now see that which is waited for,
Unless by vapours of the marsh concealed.”

10

So quick no bowstring ever urged the shaft
To take its swift way through the nimble air,
As now I saw a bark diminutive,
Approaching us upon the waters there,
Under the guidance of a single boatman ;
Who cried : “ What art thou come, thou caitiff soul ? ”
“ Phlegyas,³ Phlegyas, thus in vain you cry

¹ A signal for the boat is made and answered.

² Virgil.

³ Phlegyas in ancient mythology was condemned to Hell, for the

For this time," answering him my Master said ; ²⁰
" He is your's no longer, than to pass the marsh."
As one who hearing of some great deceit
That has been worked on him, bewails himself ;
Such one was Phlegyas, in his gathered rage.

My leader now went down into the boat,
And then caused me to enter it with him ;
But it seemed laden only when I came.
Soon as my leader and myself embarked,
The ancient prow moved on, and cut its way
Deeper in water, than with others wont. ³¹
As we were going on the stagnant pool,
Before me, threw himself, one bathed in mud,
Saying : " Who art thou, coming ere thy time ? "
Then I to him : " I come, but not to stay ;
But who art thou, that art become so foul ? "
He said : " Thou seest I am one that wails."
I then to him : " With wailings and with pains,
Accurséd spirit, mayst thou here remain,
For, all fouled as thou art, I know thee well."
Then on the boat he seized with both his hands : ⁴⁰
On which the prudent Master thrust him off,
Saying : " Away ! to join the other dogs."
Then with his arms encircled he my neck,
And kissed my face, and said . " O noble soul,
How blessed she who bore thee in her womb.
This was a proud one in the world above ;
There is no good to deck his memory,
And so, his shade is here with torture mad.
How many monarchs held them high on earth,
And now here wallow like to swine in mire, ⁵¹
Leaving behind them horrible dispraise."

impiety of burning Apollo's temple at Delphi. Hence the propriety of placing him as the ferryman over Styx to the burning city in which unbelievers are punished.

Then I : " O Master, I have great desire
To see him suffocating in the slough,
Before we leave the limits of the lake."
And he to me : " Before the other shore
Shall show itself, thou wilt be satisfied ;
Thy wish shall be fulfilled to thy delight."
Soon after this, beheld I such a rush
Made on him by the miry populace,
That yet I praise God for it, and rejoice. " "
They all yelled : " At Filippo Argenti ! " "
And the wild spirit of that Florentine
Turned himself with his teeth against himself ;
And so I left him, and no more can tell.

Now on my ears there fell a sound of woe,
So that I strained my eyes intent to look.
And the good master said : " And now, my son,
The city nears, which has the name of Dis,
With its dread citizens, and host of men."
I then : " O Master, all its minarets " "
There in the valley clearly I discern
Bright red, as if from forth a furnace come."
Then he to me : " The everlasting fire
Which burns within, thus ruddy makes them show,
As thou canst see in this low depth of hell."
We now advanced within the fosses deep,
Which trenched about that place disconsolate :
The walls appeared as if of iron made.
Not without making first a circuit large,
We reached the place at which the boatman shouting, " "
Cried : " Get ye out, for here the entrance is."
Within the gate beheld I many thousands
Of those rained down from heaven : angrily

⁴ A Florentine noted for his fierce and uncontrollable temper, and called Argenti from having his horse shod with silver, to gratify his vanity.

They said : " Who may this be, who without death
 Thus through the kingdom of the dead proceeds ? "
 Then did my learned Master signal make,
 To show he wished to speak with them apart ;
 And they a little bated their great rage,
 And said : " Come thou alone, but he must go,
 Who has so boldly entered on this realm ;
 Alone he must return on his fool's way ;
 See if he can : but thou shalt here remain,
 Who on so dark a road hast marshalled him."

90

Bethink thee, reader, how I must have sunk
 At hearing of these most accurséd words ;
 Because I thought I never should return.
 " O my dear leader, who these seven^s times,
 Hast brought me safety, and hast rescued me
 From depths of danger which surrounded me,
 Do not now leave me," I said, " thus undone.
 If the advancing further is denied,
 Together let us our swift steps retrace."
 And then the Master who thus far had led,
 Said to me : " Fear not ; for our onward course
 No one can stop, by such is made our grant.
 Here wait for me, and to thy anxious soul
 Give comfort, and with good hope nourish it.
 Forsake thee will I not in this deep world."

100

Thus then departed, leaving me alone,
 My loving father, and in doubt I stayed,
 Revolving—Yes or No—would he return.
 What he proposed to them, I could not hear,
 But he for no long time stood there with them ;
 To get first in, they with each other vied,

110

^s That is, from the three Beasts—Charon—Minos—Cerberus—
 Plutus—Phlegyas—Filippo Argenti.

And these our enemies then shut the gate
 Against my Master who remained outside,
 And with slow paces wended back to me :
 With downcast eyes, and looks that were deprived
 Of all their courage, he with sighings spoke :
 " Who has denied to me these sad abodes ? " 120
 Then said to me : " Because I am in wrath,
 Fear not but I shall conquer in the strife,
 Whate'er resistance is prepared within.
 No novelty is this their insolence ;
 They showed it once at that less secret gate,⁶
 Which without locks remains until this day,
 And over which thou sawest the dread scroll :
 And hither now from it descends the steep
 Proceeding through the circles without guide,
 One such, that for him will the city open." 130

⁶ Referring to a similar resistance supposed to have been made to Christ's entrance into Hell. Comp. *Piers Ploughman*. Vision. Passus. 18.

—— " a voice aloud said :
 ' Duke of this dim place, anon undo the gates,
 That Christ may come in, the king's son of heaven !'
 And with that breath brake Hell."



CANTO IX.

THE FURIES —THE ANGEL SENT FROM HEAVEN —THE
BURNING GRAVES

Soon as the colour which by fear was chased,
My leader saw returning to my cheeks,
Again his own looks he himself resumed .
Intent he held himself, as listening,
Because for no long space the eye could pierce
Through the black air, and through the vapour dense.
“Yet will it fall to us to win this fight,”
He thus began ; “if not—then we have help—
And yet how slow to me that one arrives.”
I could perceive him trying to correct
What he first said, by that which followed it,
Which was in conflict with what went before

And not the less his speech occasioned fear,
Because interpreting his broken words,
Perhaps I took them worse than he had meant.

“ Into this depth of the distressful hollow
Descend they ever from that upper stage
Where loss of hope is all their punishment ? ”
Such question made I ; then he, “ Rare indeed
It happens,” answering me, “ that one of us 20
Performs the journey, on which now I go.
Yet true it is, that once to upper life
I was evoked by fierce Erichtho’s ’ spells,
Who to their bodies would call spirits back :
A short time was I parted from the flesh,
When me she forced to go within that wall,
To fetch for her a soul from Judas’ place.
That is the lowest place, most dark of all,
Farthest from heaven, which the whole surrounds.
I know the road well, therefore be secure. 30
The lake, which its great stench thus exhales,
In midst of it the Woeful City holds,
Where without rage we cannot enter in ; ”
And more he said, but what I cannot tell,
For I was wholly by a sight engrossed,
Near that high tower with the burning top,
Where, in a moment, suddenly I saw
The three infernal Furies, stained with blood ;
A woman’s limbs and gesture they displayed, 40
And were begirt with hydras of green hue ;
Serpents and vipers had they for their hair,
With which their horrid brows were filleted.
Then he who knew them as the waiting-maids
Of her who is the Queen’ of endless woe :

¹ The name of a Thessalian sorceress introduced by Lucan (*Pharsalia*, vi. 505, &c.,) to raise a spirit for Sextus Pompeius.—It is, so far as is known, an invention of Dante’s that Virgil was employed by her.

² Proserpine was attended by the Furies. —

"Beware," he said, "the dread Errinyës :
That is Megæra on the left hand side,
Alecto, she who howls upon the right,
Tisiphone the mid one" —then he stopped.
With talons, each of them did tear her breast ;
They struck their hands, and cried in such loud tone,⁵⁰
That to the Poet I in terror shrunk.

"Come now, Medusa,³ if we made him stone,"
'They all cried, looking on me from above,
"We should not Theseus' foray ill avenge."

"Turn thee away, and keep thy face concealed,
For if thou see the Gorgon show herself,
Again thou never canst return above."
Thus spoke the Master, and he turned me round,
And not relying wholly on my hands,
He covered also with his own my face. 60
Q ye, that are of sound intelligence,
Note the instruction which conceals itself
Under the mantle of unpolished verse.

And now approached across the troubled waves
The uproar of a terror-laden sound,
Before which quaked the bank on either side.
Not otherwise than when a hurricane,
Rendered impetuous by encountering heats,
Attacks the forest, irresistible,
To rend the boughs, and scatter them abroad; 70
By dust preceded proudly sweeps along,
And puts to flight the shepherds and the beasts.

³ Medusa, one of the Gorgons, whose looks had the power of turning men into stones. She is summoned to revenge upon the new intruder the audacity of Theseus, who descended to the infernal regions with Pirithous to carry off Proserpine. They were saved by Hercules, when in his twelfth labour he dragged Cerberus by a chain upon earth. (See v. 98.)

Then he released my eyes, and said : " Now turn
Intent, thy sight, along the ancient foam,
Yonder where thickest gathered is the spray."

As frogs before their ancient enemy
The water-snake, betake themselves to flight,
And each one strives to leap upon the shore ;
I now saw thousands of convicted souls
So flying before One, who at a stride 80
Passed over Styx, with feet that were not wet.
He beat the heavy air from off his face,
Ever before him moving his left hand,
And only by this trouble seemed annoyed.
The messenger of Heaven I well knew,
And turned me to the Master, but he signed
That I should silent be and bow to him.
How full he seemed to me of high disdain :
He to the gate advanced, and with a rod
He opened it : for him it had no bars. 90

" O chased from heaven, miserable ones ! "

He thus began upon the threshold dread,
" Whence the encouragement to this excess ?
Against the pricks why kick ye, of that Will,
Whose ends can never of completion miss ;
And which has often added to your pain ?
What boots it, entering the lists with Fate ?
Your Cerberus, if well ye recollect,
Yet bears for it his throat and dewlap flayed."
Then he returned him by that way of slough, 100
And moved not towards us ; for he had the mien
Of one on whom pressed other cares and thoughts,
Than of the persons who before him stood.

Advanced we then our footsteps towards the town,
Securely resting on those blessed words.

Within we entered, without any strife ;
And I who was desirous to survey
The state of those, within such fortress pent,
Soon as I entered, threw my eye around,
And saw on every side a vast champaign, 110
Fertile in woes, and full of torturing.
Like as at Arles,⁴ where stagnant is the Rhone,
And as at Pola to Quarnaro near,
(That shuts in Italy, and laves her shores)
The graves uneven render all the plain ;
Likewise so did they here, on every side,
But ordered only in more dreadful sort,
For here among the tombs were fires dispersed,
By which they were to such a heat inflamed,
That no art wishes iron made more hot. 120
The tombstones all were lifted in the air ;
And from them issued sounds of agony,
Such as would come from men in pain and woe.
Then I, " O Master, tell me who are these
Who lying buried thus within these vaults,
Make themselves heard in miserable sighs ? "
Then he to me, " These are Heresiarchs,
With all their followers of every sect ;
These graves are crowded as would pass belief :
Here with his fellows each one is entombed, 130
And more or less hot are the sepulchres."
Then to the right hand turning we passed on
Between the sufferers and the lofty walls.

⁴ Arles is in a marshy district on the Rhone ; it has an ancient cemetery, called *Campus Elysus*, in which were formerly many monumental stones.—Pola is the city in Istria, near the gulf of Quarnaro, remarkable for its architectural antiquities.

CANTO X.

THE UNBELIEVERS AND HERESIARCHS.—FARINATA.—
GUIDO CAVALCANTI.

PROCEEDED onwards by a narrow path,
Between the town walls and these sufferers,
My Master, and I followed close behind.
“O bravest one, that through the wicked rounds
Hast led me,” I began, “if thee it please,
Discourse to me, and satisfy my wish :
The people that are lying in the graves,
Can they be seen ? For there are lifted up
The gravestones all, and no one keepeth guard.”

Then he to me, “They all will be enclosed 10
When from Jehosaphat’ they here return,
Bringing the bodies, which they left on earth.
Their cemetery in this place possess
With Epicurus all his followers,
Who with the body hold the soul extinct.
Further, for the request which thou hast made,
Shortly thou shalt be satisfied within,
And also in the wish thou hast withheld.”²

¹ That is, after the Day of Judgment. “I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down to the Valley of Jehosaphat, and will plead with them there.” Joel, iii. 2.

² Probably the wish to see Farinata, suggested by Ciacco’s answer regarding him.

Then I : " Good leader, I do not conceal
From thee my heart except to say the less, 10
And thou hast chiefly to this tutored me."

" O Tuscan ! thou that through this land of fire
Goest living, with such excellence of speech,
Please thee to stay awhile upon this place.
'Thy conversation makes thee plain appear
By birth belonging to that noble land,
'To which perhaps I was too troublesome."
All on a sudden issued forth this sound
From out a vault, and thereon I approached 20
Something more closely to my guide in fear.
And he to me said : " Turn thee round, what dost ?
Behold there Farinata,³ standing up ;
'Thou mayst see all of him above the waist."

I had already fixed on him my sight,
And he was rising with a breast and brow,
As if he entertained great scorn of hell.
And then my leader's strong and ready hand
Drew me to him across the sepulchres,
And said to me : " Be sure thy words are clear."
As soon as I to his grave's foot had come, 30
Awhile he scanned me, and as in disdain
He made demand : " Who were thy ancestors ? "

I, who was all desirous to obey,
Nothing concealed from him, but opened all ;
At which he superciliously frowned,
Then said : " They were most bitterly opposed "

³ Farinata degli Uberti, the great Guibeline leader of the preceding generation : placed here as having denied the immortality of the soul, and believing the doctrines of Epicurus.

⁴ Dante's ancestors and himself (at least up to the split of the Guelfs, in 1300, into Blacks and Whites, of whom the latter, upon the Pope's siding with the Blacks, naturally became Guibeline,) were Guelfs ; and they had been expelled from Florence by the Guibelines in 1248, and again

To me, and to my fathers, and my side,
 Wherefore I did twice banish them abroad."
 "If they were banished, they returned again,"
 I answered him, "the one, and other time,
 An art which thine have not contrived to learn."

50

And then there rose upon the sight, revealed
 Down to the chin, a shadow^b by his side ;
 I think that he was raised upon his knees :
 He looked around me, as if he desired
 To see if with me some one else were not ;
 Then when his gazing was exhausted quite,
 Weeping, he said to me : " If through this dark
 Prison thou goest by excellence of mind,
 Where is my son, and wherefore not with thee ? "
 Then I to him : " I come not of myself ;
 He that attends me there, by whom I come
 Perhaps thy Guido had him in contempt." ^c
 The manner of his torture and his words
 Already had informed me of his name,
 And therefore was my answer thus precise.
 Starting up suddenly, he cried out : " How ?
 Dost thou say *had*, then is he not alive ?
 Does not the sweet light fall upon his eyes ? "
 On the encounter of some short delay
 Made by me ere I answer gave to him,
 Supine he fell, and forth was seen no more.

70

That other of great soul, at whose request
 I had remained, nor silently looked on,

in 1260, after the battle of Montapertio ; but they had returned, so that in 1300, the Guelphs were dominant in Florence, and the Guibelines in exile.

^b This is Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti, the father of Dante's friend, Guido Cavalcanti, himself also a poet and philosopher. Guido was son-in-law of Farinata (but belonged to the opposite party), and was alive at Easter, but died in the December of 1300.

^c Probably, as not having admired Virgil enough to satisfy Dante.

Nor turned his neck, nor moved in any part ;
 " And if "—continuing the former talk—
 " As thou sayst, they have failed to learn this art,
 That gives me torment, greater than this bed.
 But fifty times shall not be re-illumed
 The disk of her, that is our sovereign here, 80
 Ere thou shalt know how difficult that art is.⁷
 And as thou wouldst to the sweet world return,
 Say, why thy people are so fiercely set
 Against my party in all their decrees."
 Then I to him : " The rout and slaughter great"
 That tinged the Arbia with ruddy hue,
 In our assembly to such measures leads."
 After his head he had with sighing shaken :
 " There I was not alone," he said, " nor yet
 Without good reason with the others moved. 90
 But alone was I when it was agreed
 By every one that Florence should be razed,
 The one that saved her in the sight of all."

" If thou wouldst have thy progeny find rest,"
 I prayed him, " now unloose for me the knot,
 Which has my mind entangled in this thing.
 It seems, if I hear right, that thou canst see
 Beforehand, that which time shall bring with it,
 But with the present, it is otherwise." "

⁷ The Whites, expelled from Florence in 1302, made their last attempt to return in June 1304 (that is, within fifty months of the time of Farinata's prediction), and after that time their return became more and more hopeless, and, in fact, never took place.

⁸ Farinata commanded the forces of the Guibeline allies, when they completely defeated the Florentines and other Guelphs of Tuscany, at Montaperto, on the river Arbia, near Sienna, on 4th September, 1260. Soon after the battle, a diet of the Guibeline cities was held at Empoli, when it was proposed to raze Florence to the ground, and altogether destroy its political existence. Farinata alone resisted the destruction of his native city, and saved it from extermination.

⁹ Because although Farinata had predicted Dante's exile, Cavalcante did not know that his son was not dead.

"We see, like they which have imperfect light,"¹⁰⁰
He said : " the things that are remote from us,
So much of light the great God to us grants ;
But as they draw near, or exist, then nought
Our sense is, and except what others bring
We have no knowledge of your human state ;
Further thou must conceive, that all extinct
Will be our power of knowing, from that point
When of futurity the gate is shut."

Then somewhat grieving at my own delay,
I said : " Reply now to that fallen one,
That with the living still his son is joined,
And if to answer I before was dumb,
Inform him, so it was, because I thought
Upon the doubts, that thou for me hast solved."
And now the Master called to come away ;
Wherefore I prayed the spirit in more haste
That he would tell me who were laid with him.
" Here, with some thousands do I lie," he said ;
" Within there is the second Frederick,"¹¹⁰
Also the Cardinal¹¹—"nought of the rest."
Then he withdrew, and I towards the old
Bard turned my steps, revolving in my mind
That converse which seemed ominous to me.

Onwards he moved, and then, as we advanced,
He said : " For wherefore art thou thus amazed ? "
Him in this question then I satisfied :

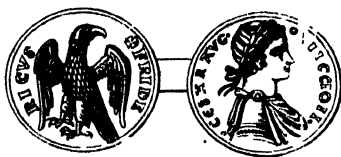
¹⁰ The Emperor Frederick 2nd. (d. 1250) was excommunicated by the Church of Rome for his political resistance to the Popedom, as well as for his promotion of enlightened knowledge, and his cordial intercourse with his Saracen subjects in Sicily ; which, together with the laxity of his private life, exposed him to the popular charge of epicureanism and heresy.

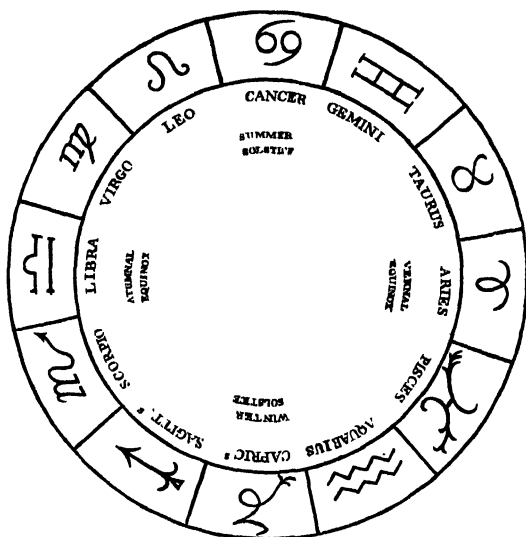
¹¹ Ottavio degli Ubaldini (d. about 1273) and called *the* Cardinal, as sufficiently indicated in that way. He used to say that *if* he had a soul, he had lost it for the Guibelines.

“Let thy mind treasure that which thou hast heard
Against thee ;” thus the learned one advised,
“But now attend”—and he his finger raised—
“When thou shalt be before the gentle sight 130
Of her, whose fair eyes everything can see,
Thou wilt by her ¹² of thy life’s course be taught.”

Then he directed to the left his steps,
We left the wall, and turned towards the midst
Upon a path that struck into a valley
Which over it made horrible its stench.

¹² Beatrice.





CANTO XI.

GRAVE OF ANASTASIUS.—DESCRIPTION OF THE REMAINING PART OF HELL.

UPON the margin of a lofty cliff
 Formed by huge shattered rocks that circled round,
 We came above a crowd more dreadful yet.
 And here by reason of the dread increase
 Of stench thrown up from the profound abyss,
 We made approach to it behind the stone
 Of a large tomb, on which I saw a writing,
 Which said : I hold Pope Anastasius,¹
 Him whom Photinus drew from the right path.

¹ One of the Popes of that name (probably the Second) supposed to have been struck dead for adopting the heresy of Photinus of

“Needful it is that our descent be slow 20
Until the senses somewhat are inured
To this foul blast, and it shall cease to vex.”
Thus much the Master; then: “Some recompence,”
I said, “discover, lest the time should pass
Useless.” Then he: “For that will I provide.
My son, on the within side of those rocks,”
He thus began, “there are three lesser rounds
Each below each, like those which we have left.
They all are peopled with accurséd souls;
And that hereafter seeing may suffice, 20
Now learn for what and how they are confined.

“Of all the wickedness that Heaven hates,
Injustice is the aim, and to this end
Others are injured or by force or fraud.
But fraud, as being man’s peculiar vice,
Displeases God most, and most deep are placed
The fraudulent, to suffer greater pains.
With those who used force, is the first stage filled;
But as there are three to whom force is done, 20
In three rings it is separately planned.
To God, to self, and to his neighbour, man
May violence do; I mean to them and theirs,
As thou shalt hear at greater length explained.
For death by violence, and grievous wounds
Man to his neighbour deals, and to his goods
Plunder, and fire, and despoiling waste.
Whence murderers, and all that strike in wrong,
Spoilers, and robbers all, are tormented
In the first circle in their divers bands.

“Upon himself a man may violence do, 40
Or on his goods, and therefore in the next

Thessalonica, who lived in the fourth century, and wrote against the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Circle it is, that fruitlessly repents
 Whoever banishes himself from earth,
 Or games away and squanders his estates,
 And mourns the life whence joy he might have had.

“Man may do violence to the Deity
 By cursing and denying him in heart,
 And by despising nature and her gifts :
 And therefore does the smaller circle stamp
 Under its signet Sodom and Cahors,²
 And those who speak in heart despising God.

“Frauds, for which every conscience feels remorse,
 A man may use with those who trust in him,
 Also to such as lend no confidence :
 It seems as if this latter case destroyed
 Only the kindly bonds by nature framed,
 Whence in the second circle there are lodged
 Witchcraft, hypocrisy, and flattery,
 Falsehood, and privy stealing, simony,
 Pandars, and coseners, and such like filth.
 But in the other case, is lost the love
 Natural to all, and that additional
 From which ensues a special confidence :
 Whence in the smallest circle, central point
 Of all the universe, and where sits Dis,
 For ever every traitor is consumed.”

Then I : “O Master, clear enough proceeds
 Thine explanation, and distinguishes
 This dungeon, and the people it contains.
 But tell me—those in the morass of slime—

² The city of that name in Guienne, gave its name to the *Coursini* or Christian usurers of the 13th century, whose extortions were even worse than those of the Jews. Some of them came to England in the train of the Pope's legate in the time of Henry 3rd, and Matthew Paris (1235) speaks of them as an “abominable plague.”

Those whom the wind drives—and the rain assails—
 And those who meet, with such reproachful tongues—
 Why these are not within the Burning City
 Punished, if in the wrath of God they are;
 And if they are not, then why in such state?"
 Then he to me: "Why such digression make
 Thy thoughts beyond what is their usual wont,
 And whither does thy mind thus wandering stray?
 Hast thou no recollection of the words
 In which thine Ethics,³ handling them, describe
 The three desires upon which Heaven frowns,
 Incontinence, and Malice, and insane
 Brutishness; and in what way Incontinence
 Offends God less, and lesser blame attracts?
 If thou this passage wilt consider well,
 And to remembrance call what kind are they
 That out of this place suffer punishment,
 Well thou mayst see, why from these reprobates
 They are apart, and why with less of wrath
 The Divine Justice on them lays its pains."

"O Source of light, that clears all troubled views,
 So much of pleasure thy solutions give,
 To doubt is as delightful as to know;
 And now again a little back return
 To where thou saidst that usury offends
 The divine goodness, and the knot resolve."

³ Aristotle, Nicom. Ethics, vii. 1:—"In morals three things are to be avoided—Malice, Incontinence, Brutishness." Of these *Incontinence* knows good from evil and prefers good, but cannot resist the temptation to evil. *Malice* also knows good from evil, but prefers evil. *Brutishness* has no moral choice, and may be called instinctively evil.

⁴ The 1st circle is Limbo, or the place of the virtuous heathen. In the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th circles are punished the deadly sins of Carnal Luxury, Gluttony, Avarice (and its opposite), Anger, and Sloth, which belong to the Aristotelian head of Incontinence. In the 6th circle are the Heretics and Epicureans; in the 7th circle are the Violent in three divisions, viz., as against others, self, and God; the last being again subdivided into offenders against God, in his own person, in nature, and in

"Philosophy," he said, "to him that marks,
 Teaches, and that not only in one place,
 How nature her accustomed course derives
 From the divine mind, and its faculties : 100
 And if thy Physics^a thou wilt well consult,
 After not many pages thou wilt find
 That man's art her as close as possible
 Follows, as scholar on his master waits ;
 So that man's art, as 'twere, is God's grandchild.
 By these two, if thou wilt recal to mind
 The book of Genesis, from first was fixed
 That man should gain his life and speed his race :^b
 And as the usurers take another course,
 Nature herself, and nature's follower, 110
 They outrage ; for on others they depend.
 But follow me now, to proceed seems good ;
 On the horizon do the Fishes' slide,
 The Wain lies wholly over the north-west,
 And further onwards there the cliff descends."

art. In the 8th circle, or Malebolge, are the Fraudulent in ten divisions, viz. :—1. Seducers of Women ; 2. Flatterers ; 3. Simonists ; 4. Diviners ; 5. Traffickers ; 6. Hypocrites ; 7. Thieves ; 8. Crafty Counsellors ; 9. Fomenters of Civil Discord ; 10. Falsifiers, including four subdivisions of Alchemists, Personators, Coiners, and the False in Words. All these belong to the head of Malice, which corresponds to the deadly sin of Envy. The 9th circle contains Traitors in four divisions, viz., against kin, country, friends, and benefactors, and is put under the head of Brutishness, which corresponds with Pride, the seventh and last of the deadly sins.

^a Arist. Physics, ii. 2. Compare also Hooker, Eccl. Pol. i. 3. § 4 :—"Those things which nature is said to do, are by divine art performed, using nature as an instrument."

^b "In the sweat of thy face, shalt thou eat bread."—Genesis, iii. 19.

⁷ The sun being in Aries, and the Fishes, the next sign in the zodiac, rising on the horizon, it is indicated that it is two hours to sunrise, as is also marked by the place of the Wain.

CANTO XII.

THE SEVENTH CIRCLE, WHICH HAS THREE DIVISIONS FOR
THE VIOLENT.—THE MINOTAUR.—THE CENTAURS —THE
VIOLENT AGAINST OTHERS —PHLEGETHON, THE RIVER OF
BOILING BLOOD

THE place where to descend the precipice
We came, was alp-like, and by what was there
Such as all eyes would willingly avoid :
And like that landslip which upon the bank,
On this side Trento, to the Adige fell,
Caused by an earthquake, or the loosened soil,
Where from the highest point at which it starts
Down to the plain, so headlong is the steep
That all means of descending are denied :
Such was the steep way down this chasm of rocks. ¹⁰

Upon the summit of the rugged brow
Extended lay the infamy of Crete ¹
That was conceived in the pretended cow.
When it saw us to bite itself it fell
As if by inward rage it was distract.
My learned one then called to it: "Perhaps
Thou thinkest this the Duke of Athens is
Who put thee, on the earth above, to death.
Begone, O monster, for he cometh not
With information from thy sister gained, ²⁰

¹ The Minotaur, slain by Theseus (Duke of Athens), by help of the clue to the labyrinth of Crete, supplied to him by his sister Ariadne : and placed here as guardian of the circle of the Violent.

But only comes to see thy punishments.”
And like a bull, that reeling on the spot
Where he has just received his mortal wound
Cannot wheel round, but staggers to and fro,
In like sort then I saw the Minotaur.
Cried then the prudent one : “ Run to the pass ;
While in its rage ’tis well that thou escape.”
So we our way took through the scattered waste
Of rocks that often were to motion stirred
Under my feet, by the unwonted weight. 70

Reflecting went I. Then he said : “ Thou thinkest
Perhaps upon the chasm that is guarded
By that brute’s rage, which I have put to flight.
Be now acquainted, that the other time
When I descended to this lower hell,
These rocks had not yet tumbled from above.
But just before that time, if I well know,
When He arrived who that most noble spoil
From the first circle carried off from Dis :
The deep and noisome hollow all around 40
So trembled ² that I thought the universe
With that desire yearned, which some believe
To Chaos often has the world reduced :³
And at that time, upon these ancient heights
Here and elsewhere, this devastation fell.
But on the valley look, for we approach
The river of the blood within which boil
All that by violence their neighbours hurt.
O blind cupidity, O foolish rage,
That so incite men in the fleeting life, 50
And in the eternal plunge them sadly here ! ”

² In the Earthquake at the Crucifixion, which preceded Christ’s descent into Hell.

³ Empedocles held that by the operation of certain natural forces of Hate and Love, the world is at alternate epochs, reduced to chaos and restored again to order.

I saw a wide trench rounded in a curve,
Like that which girdles all the plain around,
According to the teaching of my guide :
Along the cliff's foot, and in single file,
Centaurs were going, with their arrows armed
As to the chase on earth they used to go.
Seeing us come down, halted everyone ;
And from the troop, there separated three
Prepared with bows and with their javelins :
One from afar cried : " To what punishment
Advance ye, that descend on the hill side ?
Speak whence ye are, or else I draw my bow ! "

60

Then said my Master, " Our reply to this,
To Chiron we will make, who close by stands,
Thy hasty will did ever injure thee."
And " This is Nessus," touching me, he said,
" Who for fair Deianira lost his life,
And at the same time planned his own revenge.
He in the middle, gazing on his breast,
Is the great Chiron, who Achilles nursed ;
Pholus the other, who was full of rage.
They go in thousands round about the trench,
And shoot their arrows at the souls that rise
More than their crime allots, above the blood."

70

Then as to these swift monsters we approached,
Chiron an arrow took, and with its notch
Combed back his beard, that hung about his jaws.
When his capacious mouth he thus had bared,
He said to his companions : " Do ye see
That what the hinder touches is disturbed,
As is not wont with footsteps of the dead ? "

80

Then my good guide, now standing by his breast,
Where the two natures in conjunction met,

Answered: "He truly lives; to me alone
 Belongs the showing him this valley dark,
 Necessity compels him, and not love;
 From singing Alleluiahs broke awhile
 She that committed to me this new charge:
 He is no robber: I no felon soul.
 But by that Power, under which I hold
 My footsteps now upon this savage strand,
 Give one of thine to whom we may keep near
 That where the passage is he may instruct,
 And carry this one on his back behind,
 For he is not a spirit that can fly."

90

Chiron then turning round on his right side,
 To Nessus said: "Return, and be their guide,
 And pass them, if the other troop thou meet."
 Then with this faithful escort we advanced
 Along the margin of that boiling gore,
 From which the seething ones sent piercing shrieks.
 There I saw people to the eyebrows plunged;
 And, said the Centaur: "These the tyrants are
 Who upon bloodshed and on rapine lived;
 Here they are waiting for their cruel deeds.
 See Alexander, and fierce Dionysius⁴
 Who laid on Sicily such heavy years;
 And that head which so black a scalp displays
 Is Azzolino,⁵ and that white one, there,
 Is Obizzo⁶ of Este, who in sooth
 Upon earth by his son was put to death."
 Then to the bard I turned me, but he said;
 "Now he is first with thee, I second come."

100

110

⁴ Alexander the Great, and Dionysius of Sicily.

⁵ Azzolino or Ezzelino da Romano, Vicar Imperial of the Emperor Frederick 2nd, and Lord of Padua and other cities in Lombardy, d. 1259. The histories of the time are full of his cruelty and tyranny.

⁶ Obizzo of Este, Marquis of Ferrara, a cruel and rapacious tyrant, was smothered by his son Azzo in 1293.

A little onwards, and the Centaur stopped
 Before a multitude, who to the neck
 Emergent from the bubbling flood were seen.
 He showed a soul' apart upon one side,
 And said: "He struck within the pale of God
 A heart which still is honoured on the Thames." 1.0
 Next I saw people who from out the stream
 Held up the head, and afterwards the chest,
 And among these I many recognised.
 Thus lowering by slow degrees still sinks
 The blood until it only hides the feet;
 And here across the channel was our ford.

"If thou wilt from this station well observe
 The boiling flood, and how it does abate,"
 Thus spoke the Centaur, "thou mayst understand
 How towards the other end aye deeper falls 1.0
 The bottom, until that part it has reached
 Where tyranny must ever groan in pains.
 On that side, Divine Justice punishes
 That Attila, who was a scourge on earth,
 Pyrrhus and Sextus,⁸ and for ever draws
 Their tears, that with the seething it unlocks;
 Corneto's Rinier and Pazzo⁹ too
 Who did such robbery along the ways."

Returned he then, and once more crossed the ford.

⁷ Guy de Montfort, who in 1271, in a church at Viterbo, and during the celebration of mass, assassinated Prince Henry, the son of Richard Earl of Cornwall, king of the Romans, and the nephew of Henry 3rd.; in revenge for the death and treatment of his father Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. Henry's body was brought over to England, and buried at Hayles in Gloucestershire. His heart was deposited in Westminster Abbey, in a golden cup, near St. Edward's shrine, and is also said to have been exhibited on London Bridge.

⁸ Pyrrhus king of Epirus, and Sextus Pompeius.

⁹ Notorious robbers and assassins.

CANTO XIII.

THE VIOLENT AGAINST THEMSELVES.—THE WOOD OF SUICIDES.
—THE HARPIES.—PIETRO DELLE VIGNE.—THE SPEND-
THRIFTS.—THE HUNT OF THE BLACK HOUNDS.

Nessus not yet the other side had gained,
When we on this side came into a wood,
That had in it no sign of any path.
Not green the leaves, but of a dusky stain ;
The boughs not straight, but knotted and involved ;
There was no fruit, but poison-laden thorns :
And no such rough and darkling lairs possess
The savage animals, that hold in hate,
Betwixt Corneto and Cecina,¹ the tilled land.
In this place the foul Harpies have their nests 10
Who drove the Trojans from the Strophades,
With a sad prophecy of future ills.²
They have broad wings, with human face and neck,
Claws on their feet, and feathered their vast paunch :
And over those strange trees they make their cries.
Then the good Master : “ Ere thou farther goest,
Know, that thou art within the second ring,”

¹ Corneto and Cecina are towns respectively not far from Leghorn, and Civita Vecchia, and between which lies a considerable tract of the *Maremma*, or unwholesome lowlands extending along the Mediterranean coast of Italy.

² Virgil. *Æn.* iii. 245.

He thus began, "and so long thou wilt be,
 Until thou comest to the dreadful sand.
 But now attentive look, and thou wilt see 20
 Things that will give thee faith in my discourse."

I now heard wailing upon every side,
 But I saw none from whom it could proceed :
 So that in all amazement I drew up.
 I think, that he thought, that I must suppose
 That all these voices rose among the trees
 From people who were hiding from us there :
 Then said the Master : " If thou wilt break off
 A little branch from any of these plants,
 The thought thou hast will then appear untrue." 30
 Then I a little putting forth my hand,
 Tore a small branch from off a prickly tree,
 When the trunk cried : " Why dost thou pluck at me ?"
 And it became discoloured with dark blood.
 Again it cried : " Why dost thou rend me thus ?
 Hast thou not any pity in thy breast ?
 We once were men, but now we are made trees :
 Indeed, thy hand should be more merciful,
 If we had even been the souls of worms."

As a green faggot, which the while it burns 40
 At one end, at the other makes a moan,
 And hisses with the air as it escapes ;
 So from this stem together issued forth
 The voice and blood ; on which I let the branch
 Fall on the ground, and stood as one in fear.
 " If he could only have at first believed,"
 Answered the wise one, " O offended soul,
 What he has seen now, on my verse alone,

² An incident resembling that which follows, is related of Polydorus turned into a bush in *Æn.* iii. 22, to which Virgil alludes.

⁴ The story of Polydorus.

His hand against thee he would not have raised ;
 But I was led, as passing all belief,
 To prompt him to a thing, which grieves myself.
 But tell him who thou wast, that in the place
 Of some amends, he may renew thy fame
 In life above, to which he will return."

Then spoke the trunk : " With such sweet speech
 thou soothest,
 Silent I cannot be ; but patience have,
 If in my talk a little I enlarge.
 I then am he,⁵ who both the keys possessed
 Of Frederick's bosom, turning them about
 So softly, locking and unlocking it,
 That all men from his confidence I kept.
 Such faithfulness I had in this great trust,
 That for it I gave sleep and all my life.
 'The prostitute⁶ that never from the house
 Of Emperors takes off her leering eyes—
 'The common ruin, and the vice of courts—
 Inflamed all dispositions against me ;
 And so inflamed, they fired the Emperor
 'To turn my blooming honours to sad grief.
 My heart, now in a transport of disdain,
 'Thinking to fly from my disgrace by death,
 Made me against my most just self, unjust.
 By the new rooted fibres of this trunk
 I swear to thee, that never I broke faith

⁵ Pietro delle Vigne, or Petrus de Vineis, was for many years the confidential minister of Frederick 2nd. In 1235 he was in England as the Emperor's proxy on his marriage with Isabella, sister of Henry 3rd. (Rymer. *Fœdera*). Upon an accusation of treachery to his master he was condemned to lose his eyes, and is said to have committed suicide by dashing his head against a wall in 1245 : but there is much uncertainty as to his end, and the truth of the charges against him.

⁶ Envie is lavender of the court alway
 For she ne parteth neither night nor day,
 Out of the house of Cesar, thus saith Dant.

CHAUCER.—*Prologue to Legend of Good Women.*

With my good Lord, to whom all honour is due :
And if of you one to the world returns,
Support my memory, which prostrate lies
! Yet from the wound that envy dealt to it."

He paused awhile ; and, "As he ceases now,"
The Poet said to me, "lose not the time, 80
But speak, and ask of him, if more thou wilt."
Then I to him : "Do thou demand of him
What thou dost think will give me most content ;
For cannot I, such pity seizes me."
Then he began : "As thou wouldst have him do
Most freely that which thy discourse implores,
Imprisoned spirit, may it please thee further
To tell him how the soul is fast confined
Within these knots, and answer, if thou canst,
If any from these limbs will be set free." 90

On this the trunk sighed heavily, and then
The breath resolved itself into these words :
"Shortly an answer shall be made to thee ;
What time the fierce soul its departure takes
From out the body, whence itself it tears,
Minos assigns it to the seventh pit.
Into this wood it falls, with no fixed place ;
But in whatever part chance flings it down,
Like to a grain of corn, it germinates,
Grows to a shoot, then to a forest tree : 100
The Harpies then, by feeding on the leaves,
Give anguish, and a vent for its escape.
Like others for our bodies we shall come ;
But with them none of us shall be re clothed ;
For none should have what he has robbed himself of :
Here we shall drag them, and throughout the sad
Forest our bodies will suspended be,
Each on the thorn of its unquiet soul."

We were still waiting, listening to the trunk,
Thinking that something further it would say, 110
When we were startled by a sudden noise :
Not otherwise than he, who in approach
Perceives a boar—the chase upon his track—
And hears the uproar of the hounds and woods.
And lo ! now two upon the left hand side
Naked and torn, and flying with such force
That they broke all the branches from the trees.
The first one cried : “ Haste, haste to us, O Death ! ”
The other, thinking that he lagged too much,
Exclaimed : “ O Lano,⁷ not so quickly ran 120
Thy feet upon the plain at Toppo’s fight ! ”
And then as if his breath were failing him,
Clinging, he threw himself within a bush.
Close on their heels the forest all was full
Of black dogs ravenous and coursing swift,
Like greyhounds bounding forward from the slips.
They fixed their teeth upon the one who crouched,
And into pieces tore apart the bush ;
Then carried off with them the quivering limbs.

My leader then laid hold upon my hand 130
And led me to the bush, which sent forth cries
Through all its bleeding fractures, to no use ;
And said : “ O Iacopo of Sant’ Andrea,⁸
What made thee choose me for thy harbouring-place ?
Wherein am I to blame for thy bad life ? ”
Soon as the Master stood before the bush,
He said : “ Who wast thou, at so many points

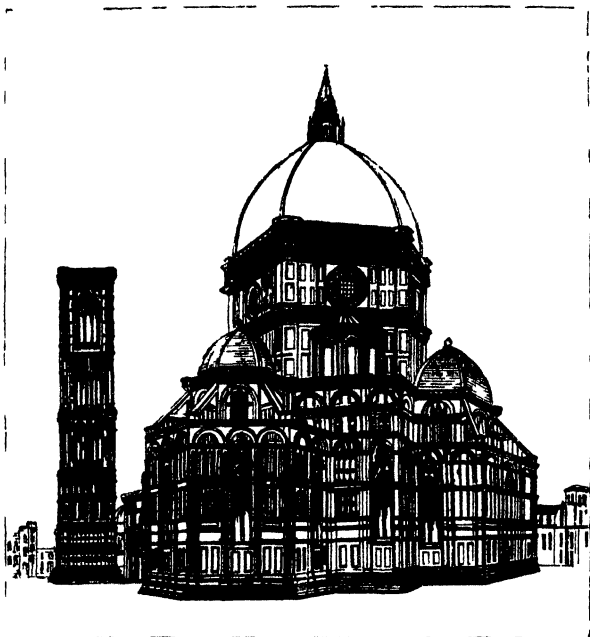
⁷ Lano, a gentleman of Sienna, who, having dissipated his estates, sought and found his death at the fight between the Florentines and Aretines at Toppo, in 1288, when he might have saved himself by flight.

⁸ A Paduan, who squandered a vast fortune, and then committed suicide. He is said to have set fire to the village at his country seat for the entertainment of an unexpected guest.

That pourest forth sad accents with thy blood?"
He then to us: "O souls, who are arrived
To see this ignominious attack, 110
Which has thus rudely torn from me my leaves,
Gather them up at foot of this sad plant;
I was of that town, which for Baptist John
Changed its first patron;⁹ wherefore he for this
Will ever make it wretched by his art:
And if it were not that by Arno's stream
Some glimpses of him there did yet appear,
The citizens who founded it again
Upon the ruins left by Attila,
Would but in vain their labour have bestowed: 115
I made my house a gibbet for myself."¹

⁹ Florence was built on the Campus Martius of the earlier town of Fiesole, and under the patronage of Mars. On its conversion to Christianity, the old temple of Mars became a church, consecrated to St. John the Baptist, and the statue of the god was removed and placed on the bank of the Arno. It is said to have fallen into the river upon the supposed taking of Florence by Attila, and to have been recovered previous to the rebuilding of the city by Charlemagne, when it was erected at the end of the old bridge: the planet Mars being then in a favourable aspect. What was left of the statue in later times continued to be superstitiously connected with the fortunes of the city. At its foot Buondelmonte was slain in the affair which led to the introduction of the Guelf and Guibeline factions in 1215; and its position had been altered in the year preceding that in which the Black and White divisions came in.

¹The name of this Florentine suicide has not been preserved with certainty.



CANTO XIV.

THE VIOLENT AGAINST GOD —THE BURNING SAND AND
RAIN OF FIRE —CAPANEUS —THE SOURCE OF THE FOUR
INFERNAL RIVERS

BECAUSE affection for my native place
Moved me, I gathered up the scattered leaves,
And I restored them to him, now grown hoarse :
We came thence to the border, where divides
The second circle from the third, and where
The dreadful art of Justice was displayed.
To make more manifest these novel things,
I must describe how on a plain we came,

That from its surface banished every plant.
The mournful wood to this is as a belt,
Lying around, as is the trench to that :
And here our steps we stayed upon its skirts.

The soil was of a thick and arid sand,
In its appearance not unlike to that
Which once was trodden under Cato's foot.¹
O Vengeance of the Lord, how much shouldst thou
Be held in terror by each one who reads
This which was manifested to mine eyes !
Here I saw many troops of naked souls,
Who all of them did miserably shriek :
And they seemed subjected to different rules.
Prostrate on earth, lay some of them, supine ;
Others were sitting with their limbs drawn up ;
And some there were who, without ceasing, ran.
Those who went round were the most numerous,
And fewer those who in their torment lay ;
But these were louder in their notes of woe.

Over the sandy plain, with lazy fall,
Wide-spreading flakes of fire were raining down,
Like snow upon the Alps, when winds are still.
As Alexander, in those sultry parts
Of India, saw that over all his host
Flames were descending solid on the earth,
Wherefore he ordered trampling on the ground
By his battalions, for the burning fumes
Were easier extinguished while alone.²
E'en so descended this eternal fire :
And the sand kindled as the tinder does

¹ On his march across the Libyan desert from Cyrene to Utica.
Lucan. Phars. ix.

² Albertus Magnus is said to relate this phenomenon on the
authority of a supposed letter from Alexander the Great to Aristotle.

Under the steel, to double their distress.
There was a constant dance, without repose,
Of wretched hands, that first here, and then there,
Were brushing off a fresh attack of flame.

Began I : " Master, thou that overcomest
All things, except those demons obdurate,
Who made resistance at the entrance gate:
Who is that great one, who seems not to feel
The burning, and lies scornful and inrapt,
So that the rain seems not to soften him ? "
And then this same one, who became aware
That I of him was questioning my guide,
Cried : " Such as I was, living, I am dead :
Let Jupiter fatigue his smith, from whom
He borrowed the sharp lightnings in his wrath,
By which I was, on my life's last day, struck ;
Let him fatigue the others, gang by gang,
In Mongibello,³ at the swarthy forge,
Calling ' Good Vulcan, send me help, more help ! '
Like as he did on Phlegra's battle⁴ field,
And let him launch at me with all his might,
A sweet revenge he never shall possess."

Spoke then my leader in so strong a voice,
That so loud never had I heard him speak :
" O Capaneus, because thou humblest not
Thy pride, for this thou hast more punishment :
No retribution, but thine own mad rage,
Would for thine outrage be a pain enough ! "
Then he returned to me, with softer look,
And said : " This of the seven chiefs was one,
Who besieged Thebes ; he held, and seems to hold,
God in disdain, and nothing values him :

³ *Ætna.*

⁴ *Between the gods and the giants.*

But as to him I said, his own despite
 Is in his breast a torment justly due.
 Follow me now, and take heed lest thou put
 Thy feet as yet upon the burning sand :
 But to the forest ever keep them turned."

Arrived we silently to where there sprung
 Forth from the wood, a little rivulet,
 Whose crimson hue yet fills me with affright..
 And as the stream of Bulicamë⁶ flows,
 Which afterwards the sinful women share,
 So through the sandy plain this took its course.
 The bottom and the banks upon each side,
 With both the edges, all were made of stone,
 Whence I concluded that there lay the path.

"Through all the rest which I to thee have shown,
 Ever since first we entered by that gate,
 Of which the threshold is denied to none,
 Nothing has been submitted to thine eyes,
 So noteworthy as is this present stream,
 Over which are extinguished all the flames."
 Such were the words proceeding from my guide ;
 And then I prayed him to display the feast
 To which he had excited appetite.

"In middle sea there lies a desert land,"
 Thus he continued, "which is known as Crete,
 Under whose king the world was one time chaste.
 There is a mountain, which one time rejoiced
 In foliage and fountains, Ida called,
 But now forlorn and like a bygone thing.
 This as the cradle sure, erst Rhea chose,

⁶ The Bulicamë is a natural pool of hot water near Viterbo, fed by a mineral spring. From it issues a constant stream, upon which houses of dissolute resort are said to have formerly stood.

Of her young son, and better to conceal him
When he might cry, she caused be made great noise.
Within the mountain stands a vast Old Man,
Who towards Damiata turns his back,
And towards Rome, as to his mirror, looks.
His head is fashioned of the finest gold,
And of pure silver are his arms and breast.
Thence to the middle he is made of brass :
The rest below is iron of good proof,
Except the right foot, which is of baked clay, 110
On which, more than the other one, he rests.
Each part of him, except the gold, is cleft
By a deep fissure, which distils the tears
Which, when collected, to the hollow pierce.
Determined to this valley is their course ;
Styx they form, Acheron and Phlegethon :
Then by this narrow conduit they descend
Beneath, where can there be no lower fall :
They form Cocytus : and what is that lake
Thyself shalt see ; not here it needs be told.”⁶ 120

I then to him : “ If this same rivulet
Thus takes its origin within our world,
How is it only upon these banks seen ? ”
Then he to me : “ Thou knowest this place is round,
And for all that thou hast so far advanced
Descending, ever keeping the left hand,
Thou hast not yet the perfect circuit made.
Therefore, if as a new thing this appears,
A wondering face it should not make thee show.”

⁶ The figure of the Old Man (taken from the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream and explained by Daniel) represents the successive ages of the world ; and is connected with mythological and secular history by its place in Crete, the birth-place of Jupiter, and the cradle of the Trojan and Roman races. The tears of mankind, which have flowed in all ages except the golden, are made to supply the infernal rivers.

Then I again: "O Master, where are seen 130
Lethe, and Phlegethon; silent of one,
Thou sayest the other from this rain proceeds?"
"Be sure that all thy questions give delight,"
He answered: "but that red and boiling flood,
Ought easily to solve one which thou makest.
Thou wilt see Lethe, but from this stream far,
Where the souls gather for the cleansing bath,
When the repented crime is purged away."
Then he said: "It is time that we depart 140
From out the wood: be sure thou follow close:
The banks, which are not burnt, denote the way,
And over them the vapours all are quenched."

CANTO XV.

THE VIOLENT AGAINST GOD IN NATURE.—BRUNETTO LATINI

ONE of the solid brims supports us now,
And overhead hang vapours of the stream,
Which save the banks and water from the flames.
Like as the Flemings 'twixt Cadsand and Bruges,
Fearing the sea which presses in on them,
'Throw up defences, to repel the waves ;
And as the Paduans along the Brenta,
'Their country-seats and castles to protect,
Before Chiarentana feels the heat :¹
'These were constructed with the like design, 10
Only that not so lofty nor so large,
'Their engineer, whoe'er he was, made these.

We had already from the wood advanced,
So far, I could not see it, whence I was,
Although I backward turned myself to look,
When with a company of souls we met,
'That went beside the bank, and each of them
Surveyed us, as at nightfall men are wont
To scan each other, when the moon is new ;
And in such sort they strained their eyes on us, 20

¹ When the snow melting on the Alps would increase the waters of the river ; Chiarentana or Carinthia, being put for the whole Alpine range.

As an old tailor on his needle's eye.
 On this wise scrutinised by all that crowd,
 One recognised me, and laid hold on me
 By my robe's skirt, and said: "How wonderful!"
 And I, as he put forth to me his arm,
 So keenly gazed on his burnt countenance,
 That notwithstanding it was fire-changed,
 It claimed a recognition in my mind:
 And holding down my hand towards his face,
 I answer made: "Brunetto,² art thou here?"
 Then he: "My son, if good to thee it seems,
 Brunetto Latini with thee awhile
 Backward will turn, and let the troop proceed."
 Then I: "I pray thee all I can, to this;
 And if thou wilt that I with thee should sit,
 I will, with leave of him, with whom I go,"
 "My son," he said, "whoever of this troop,
 One moment halts, a hundred years must lie,
 Nor fan himself, when by the fire smitten.
 Therefore move onwards, I will follow close,
 And presently rejoin my company,
 Who go lamenting their eternal pains."

Down from the causeway dared I not descend
 Level with him to walk, but low my head
 I bore, like one who reverently goes.
 Then he began: "What fortune or what chance
 Brings thee down here before thy dying day?
 And who is this, who marshals thee the way?"
 "Above there in the life serene on earth,"
 I answered him, "I wandered in a valley,

² Brunetto Latini (b. 1220, d. 1294), an eminent Florentine philosopher and statesman, and the preceptor of Dante in his youth. He compiled the *Tresor* or *Tesoro*, which was intended as an abridgement of all knowledge, and included a version of Aristotle's *Ethics*. It was written in French, but has only been printed in an Italian version. Brunetto had the reputation of being a "worldly man."

Before was yet fulfilled my prime of life ;
Yester morn only from it I turned back ;
This one appeared as I to it returned,
And leads me to my home along this way."

Then he to me : " If thou observe thy stars,
Thou canst not miss to find a glorious port,
If well I studied in the upper life :
And if I had not been thus early dead,
Knowing the heavens were to thee thus kind,
I should have brought thee comfort in thy task. 10
But that malignant and ungrateful race,
Who in old times came down from Fiesole,³
And smack yet of the mountain and the rock,
Make thee their enemy for thy good deeds :
With reason too ; for of the bitter sorb
No man expects to gather the sweet fig.
On earth the ancient proverb calls them blind ;
A people, greedy, envious and proud !
Be sure to keep thee from their customs pure.
Such honour will to thee thy fortune bring, 20
That both the factions will have craving need
Of thee ; but from the goat be far the grass !
Let the beast Fiesolans find provender
In one another, and not touch the plant,
If any such yet on their dunghill grows,
In which there flourishes the sacred seed
Of Romans, who remained in it what time
That nest of so much malice was first built."

" If all my prayers fulfilment had obtained,

³ The inhabitants of the old town of Fiesole on the hill mixed with the Roman colonists who founded Florence ; and the factions and crimes of the city are ascribed to the presence of their descendants among the families who boasted a pure Roman ancestry. Dante's family was one of these, and claimed through the Elisei up to the old consular line of the Frangipani.

I answered him, "thou wouldst not, at this time, 90
 Have been an outcast from the life of men :
 For in my mind is fixed, and moves me yet
 The dear and excellent paternal form
 Of thee, who, hour by hour upon the earth,
 Instructed me of man's eternity.
 For this, my gratitude, while I shall live,
 Ought to be manifested by my tongue.
 I note what thou hast said of my career,
 And keep for comment with another text,
 By a Lady, if I reach her, who will know. 95
 My only wish is, that it be made clear ;
 Conscience upbraids me not with any stings,
 And I am ready for the will of fate.
 This earnest of the future is not new :
 Therefore let Fortune turn about her wheel
 As pleases her, the countryman his mattock."

And now my Master on the right hand side
 Turned round, and fixed upon me his regards :
 Then said : " He listens well, who takes good note." 100
 But not for this the less I went in speech
 With Brunetto, and asked him who might be
 The best known and the chiefest of his band.
 Then he to me : " Of some 'tis good to know :
 But of the others silence were the best ;
 Time would prove short, to hear so long a tale.
 Know in a word, that these were of the Church,
 And celebrated students, of great fame,
 Upon earth by the same offence defiled.
 Priscian has fellowship with this sad herd,
 And Francesco d'Accorso : ' to be seen, 110

⁴ Priscian, the famous grammarian of the 6th century—Francesco d'Accorso, a Florentine, the celebrated jurisconsult of Bologna in the 13th century. His son, of the same name and profession, was employed by Edward 1st., and resided for some time in Oxford.

If thou hast any wish for such sad sight,
Is he,^a who by the servants' servitor,
Was sent from Arno to Bacchiglione,
Where he his ill-strained sinews left behind.
More I would say : but company^b and speech
Further I cannot give, for I perceive,
Yonder a fresh cloud rising from the sand,
And some, with whom I should not be, approach :
Let my Tesoro be to thee commended
In which I now live, and no more I ask."

170

Then he turned back, and was as one of them
Who at Verona^c run for the green cloth,
Across the plain ; and he resembled him
Who wins, and not the loser in the race.

^a Andrea de' Mozzi, bishop of Florence, on the Arno, who for his scandalous life was removed by the Pope (*Servus Servorum Dei*), to a less public position at Vicenza, on the Bacchiglione, where he died.

^b A cloak, or piece of cloth, was the usual prize at the foot-races of the time. At Verona it was green.

CANTO XVI.

THE SAME CONTINUED.—THE SHAF OF DESCENT TO THE
EIGHTH CIRCLE.

COME to 'a place I was, where there was noise
Of water falling in the other round,
Like to the murmuring which beehives make,
When spirits three together made advance
Running from out a troop, as it went by,
Under the shower of that smarting plague.
They came towards us ; and they all exclaimed :
“ Stop thou, for by thy habit thou dost seem
To be one of our city reprobate.”

Ah me ! what scars I saw upon their limbs
Recent and old, from burning of the flames !
The recollection of it grieves me still.
My learned teacher listened to their cry,
Then turned his looks on me, and : “ Wait awhile,”
He said, “ to these some courtesy is due :
If for the flames it were not, which emits
The nature of the place, I should pronounce
This haste were more becoming thee than them.”

As we our steps staid, they again began
Their former burden, and when us they joined,

The three perpetually round us wheeled.
 And as do wrestlers, when stripped and oiled,
 They eye their vantage, where to plant their hold,
 Before they actually join in strife,
 So each of these, with face aye veering round,
 Looked straight at me, so that his neck reversed
 Was ever turned contrary to his feet.

“ And if the misery of this shifting soil,
 Renders us despicable, and our prayers,”
 One of them said, “ and our dark blistered looks ; ³⁰
 Yet may our reputation turn thy mind,
 To tell us who thou art, whose living feet
 Convey thee in security through Hell.
 He, in whose footsteps, as thou seest, I go,
 All naked and excoriate as he is,
 Once was of higher rank than thou mayst think :
 The grandson of the good Gualdrada¹ he,
 His name was Guidoguerra ; in his life
 He was distinguished both in arms and wit.
 The other who behind me grinds the sand, ⁴⁰
 Was Tegghio Aldobrandi,² whose advice
 Should have been followed in the world above :
 And I who am in torment placed with them,
 Was Iacopo Rusticucci ; sooth
 My proud wife worked me the most injury.”

If I had been protected from the flames,
 Among them I should surely have leaped down,

¹ Gualdrada was the daughter of Bellincione Berti, an ancient noble of Florence (see Pa. xv. and xvi.), and was celebrated for her beauty and modesty. Guidoguerra commanded the Florentine Guelfs at the battle near Benevento, in which Manfred, the natural son of Frederick 2nd, contesting the crown of Sicily and supported by the Guibelines of Italy, was defeated by Charles of Anjou in 1266.

² A Guelf leader in Florence. He endeavoured to dissuade his party from the expedition which ended in the fatal battle at Montapertoso.

And, as I think, with good leave of my guide ;
But as I must thus have been scorched and burned,
Terror the inclination overcame 50
Which made me long to fold them in my arms.
Then I began : " Compassion, not contempt,
This your condition has impressed on me,
So great, it will be long ere it departs ;
Ever since this my leader spoke to me
Words, upon which I thought within myself,
Some were approaching, such as ye appear.
I of your city am, and at all times
Your actions, and your honourable names,
I have heard mentioned, and retraced with love. 60
I leave the gall ; and go to the sweet fruit
Promised to me by my veracious guide :
But to the centre first I must descend."

" As for long time, thy spirit may inform
Thy members," thereupon he answer made,
" And as thy fame may after thee be bright,
Valour and courtesy, say, if they abide
Within our city, as was wont to be,
Or if they wholly are from it gone forth ?
For Guglielmo Borsiere,³ who is plagued 70
Since late with us, and goes there with his mates,
Has much distressed us for it by his tale."

" The upstart families, and sudden gains,
Excesses have produced, and arrogance,
Florence, in thee, as thou hast ere now grieved."
Thus I spoke loudly with a front erect ;
And the three, hearing as my answer this,
Looked each on each, like men who felt the truth.
" If at all times it shall not cost thee more,"

³ A Florentine gentleman. An anecdote of him forms one of Boccaccio's tales in the Decameron (i. 8.)

Replied they all, "to answer to content,
Happy thy lot, to speak as pleases thee!
When from these dark abodes thou shalt emerge,
And shalt return to sight of the fair stars,
When thou wilt joy in saying, I have been;
Encourage men to some discourse of us."

Then they broke up their wheel, and for retreat,
It seemed as if their nimble legs were wings.
An Amen one could not articulate
So quickly as they vanished out of sight:
Then to the Master to depart seemed good;
I followed him, and not far had we gone,
When so near to us was the water's noise,
That hardly each could hear the other speak.
Like to that stream⁴ which holds its proper course,
At first from Monte Viso, towards the East,
Upon the left flank of the Apennine;
Which first is Acquacheta called, above;
Into a lower channel after sinks,
And is at Forlì of that name deprived:
Over San Benedetto loudly roars
Down from the hills, to fall in a descent,
Where for a thousand there should refuge be.⁵
So downwards o'er a broken precipice,
We heard the rushing of the tinted stream,
In such sort, as for long would crack the ear.

A cord⁶ I had, which girdled me around,
With which at one time, I indulged in hope

⁴ The river Montone, which rises on Montevise in the Apennine range.

⁵ Either because the abbey of San Benedetto should have been better filled with monks, or in allusion to a design, afterwards abandoned, of building a new town near it.

⁶ An allegorical significance has been given to this passage, founded on the belief that Dante in his youth had become a Tertiary, or lay

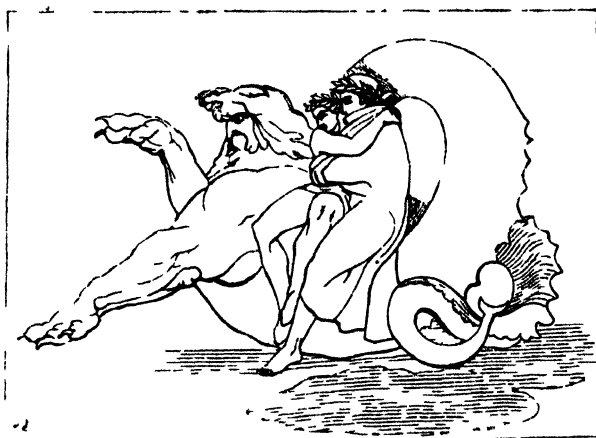
To take the leopard of the spotted skin :
 After I had unloosed it from myself,
 According to desire of my guide, 110
 I gave it to him knotted in a coil.
 Then he advancing on the right hand side,
 But yet a little standing from the edge,
 Into that deepening chasm threw it down.
 And now "Needs must, some new thing will respond,"
 Within myself I said, "to this new sign,
 Which now my Master follows with his eyes."
 How cautious it behoves that men should be,
 When near to those who see not acts alone,
 But with their knowledge can look into thoughts. 120
 To me he said : "Thou soon above wilt see
 What I look for ; and what thy fancy dreams
 Will soon display itself before thy sight."

To truth which has the semblance of a lie,
 Much as can be, a man should close his lips ;
 To shame it may expose him, without crime :
 But here I must speak out ; and by the words,
 I swear thee Reader, of this Comedy,⁷
 And as they may not of long favour miss,
 I saw through that thick gloomy atmosphere, 130
 A figure swimming upwards that approached,

member of the order of St. Francis, and worn the cord which forms part of its habit : thinking by this profession and by outward discipline to overcome the earlier temptations of life, which are symbolised by the leopard, as in Canto I. The cord is therefore fitly thrown away when he has passed those circles in which are punished the sins which may be so resisted, namely, those of Incontinence, and even those of Malice which do not involve Fraud, and when he is about to descend to the circles in which are punished the sins of a false and evil heart, and of an instinctively bad nature. The incident may further imply that reliance upon outward observances invites the approach of fraud, as the signal of the cord serves to bring up Geryon. •

⁷ Dante gave the name of Comedy to his great poem, as being written in Italian, then supposed to be less dignified than Latin, and as ending happily. In opposition to this use of the word Comedy, he calls the *Æneid* a Tragedy. In. xx. 113.

Most wonder-moving to the firmest mind ;
Like to a man returning, when he has dived
Sometime to loose the anchor, which has caught
A rock or other thing hid in the sea,
Who upwards strikes, and towards him draws his feet.



CANTO XVII.

THE VIOLENT AGAINST GOD IN ART—DESCENT TO THE
EIGHTH CIRCLE

“BEHOLD the monster with the pointed tail,
Who passes mountains, breaks through walls and arms;
Behold the thing which all the world pollutes!”

With such address, my guide to me began,
And beckoned to it to the bank to come,
Near where the marble, we had traversed, ended :
And that ill-favoured imaging of fraud
Approached and landed both his head and bust,
But lifted not his tail upon the brink.
His face was as the face of a just man,
He had an outward semblance so benign ;

But all the trunk of him was serpentlike.
 Below the armpits he had two rough paws ;
 His back and breast and ribs on either side,
 He had diversified with marks and knots ;
 With more of colour in the ground and pattern,
 Than ever Turks or Tartars gave their stuffs,
 Nor was such fabric by Arachne worked.
 And as the barges lie beside the shore
 Partly that are in water, part on land, 30
 Or as among the Germans gluttonous,
 The beaver plants himself to take his prey ;
 So rested this most execrable brute
 Upon the stone brim, which contains the sand.
 His tail was writhing in the empty space
 And upwards turned its venom-bearing fork
 Armed at the end, as is a scorpion.

The leader said : " Deflected here must be
 Something our course, that we may go to that
 Mischievous beast, who yonder lies outstretched." 30
 Then we descended keeping the left hand,
 And took ten paces on the outer edge.
 For the avoiding of the sand and flames :
 And when, at where he lay we were arrived,
 Onwards a little on the sand I saw
 People that sat close to the void abyss.
 My Master then : " In order that a full
 Experience of this circle thou mayst gain,"
 He said to me, " now go, and note their state.
 But let your conversation there be brief : 40
 Whilst thou art gone, with this one I will speak,
 To make him grant to us his shoulders strong."

Further then thus upon the front extreme,
 Of this the seventh circle, all alone
 I went, where this sad population sat.

Forth from their eyes their anguish forced escape :
 Hither and thither with their hands they flew
 Now to the fumes, now to the burning soil :
 Even as dogs do in the summer time
 With paw or muzzle, when they have been bit 50
 By gadflies, or mosquitoes, or by fleas.

Mine eyes I cast upon the face of some
 Of those on whom this dreadful fire descends,
 And I knew none of them ; but I observed
 That from the neck of each one, hung a purse
 Which had a certain mark and colouring,
 On which it seemed their eyes delighted fed.
 And as I passed among them, taking note,
 Azure I marked upon a yellow purse
 The impress and resemblance of a lion.¹ 60
 Proceeding in the course of my survey
 I saw another, ruddier than blood,
 A goose than butter whiter, which displayed ;
 And one that with a pregnant sow in blue,
 His argent satchel decorated had ;
 Who said to me : “ What dost thou in this deep ?
 Begone, but since thou art yet in the life,
 Vitaliano,² my old neighbour, know,
 Will one day sit upon my left-hand side.
 I am a Paduan with these Florentines : 70
 And they continually stun my ears,
 Crying : ‘ Let come the sovereign cavalier,³
 Who with three goats, will bear his purse adorned ! ’ ”
 Awry he pulled his mouth then, and lolled out
 His tongue like oxen when they lick the nose.
 Then I, alarmed lest more delay should vex

¹ Various usurers are indicated by the armorial bearings of their families : viz., the Gianfigliazzi, Ubbriachi, and Scrovigni.

² Vitaliano del Dente, an usurer of Padua.

³ Giovanni Buiamonte is intended ; the most infamous usurer of his time.

Him, who admonished me brief stay to make,
Abandoned to themselves these tortured souls.

I found my leader, who had mounted up
Already on the back of the fierce brute ;
He said to me : " Now be thou brave and bold ;
Now must we by such stair as this descend :
Mount thou in front, the middle I will take,
So that the tail may do no injury."
Like as the man who feels the shivering fit
Of quartan ague, colourless his nails,
Who shakes all over, only seeing shade ;
Such I became on hearing of these words :
But such reproaches made me feel ashamed
As make a servant brave for a good lord.
Upon the shoulders settled I myself :
I would have spoken, but my voice came not
As I expected : " Hold me fast around."
And he who other times had been my help,
In other straits, so soon as I had mounted,
Sustained and grasped me circled in his arms.

He said : " O Geryon,⁴ proceed thou now,
Be thy wheels ample, and slow thy descent ;
Consider the new burden which thou hast."
As from its place puts out some galleon
With backward motion, so he gathered way ;
And when he felt himself at large and free,
Turned round his tail to where his breast had been,
Then worked it, straight-extended, like an eel,
And with his paws towards him clutched the air.
Greater dismay I think could not have been,
What time that Phaëton let go the reins,

⁴ Geryon, one of the monsters of heathen mythology, is used as the symbol of Fraud, and placed as guardian over the circle in which it is punished.

Whereat the sky, as still is seen, was burnt.^a
Nor when the wretched Icarus his loins
Saw lose their pinions from the melting wax, 110
His father calling : "The wrong way thou holdest :"
Than was then mine, perceiving that I was
By air surrounded, and I saw withdrawn
All objects from the eyes, except the beast.

With gentlest motion, wafted on, he went ;
Wheeled and descended : yet I had not known,
But for the wind from 'neath and on my face.
Now could I hear the torrent on the right
Which underneath us made a frightful din ;
With eyes turned downwards I leaned forth my head, 120
But was more fearstruck by the nether gulf :
For I saw fires and I heard laments,
At which I trembling tightened all my grip :
And then I marked, as I could not before,
The turning and descent, by the great woes
Approaching us in all directions round.

Like as a hawk, who long upon the wing
Without a sight of quarry or of lure ;
Makes say the falconer : "What ? comest down ?"
Drops wearily, whence swiftly he took flight, 130
With many wheelings, and alights afar
Off from his master, sulky and enraged :
Thus at the bottom placed us Geryon,
Upon our feet at foot of the rough cliff,
And soon as of our persons he was rid,
Shot away, like an arrow from the string.

^a In allusion to one belief of the origin of the Milky Way.

CANTO XVIII.

MALEBOLGÉ, OR THE EIGHTH CIRCLE, WHICH HAS TEN DIVISIONS
FOR THE FRAUDULENT.—THE SEDUCERS OF WOMEN.—THE
WHIPS.—THE FLATTERERS.—THE SINK OF FILTH.

THERE is a place in Hell called Malebolgé,¹
Made all of rock, and of an iron stain,
As is the circle which around it goes.
Right in the middle of this dreary plot,
There yawns a pit profound, of wide extent,
The plan of which its own place will relate.
The belt then which remains, is circular,
Between the pit and the tall scarp it lies,
And has its floor divided by ten mounds :
Such figure as is given by the plan 10
Of foss on foss, as its defences traced,
About the circuit of a castle's wall,
The like appearance did these mounds present ;
And as in such a fortress, from the gates
There are drawbridges to the outer bank,
So ledges from the bottom of the rock
Proceeded, traversing the banks and moats,
On to the pit, where they unite and end.

In this place, when off shaken from the back
Of Geryon, we found us, and the Poet 20

¹ Male Bolgé, or Evil-pits.

Held to the left, and I behind him moved.
Upon the right, I saw new misery,
New torments, and new executioners,
With which the first compartment was replete.
The naked malefactors were below :
Facing they came on one side from the midst,
With us upon the other, but more swift.
Like as the Romans, for the crowd immense,
In the year of Jubilee,² upon the bridge
Took order how the multitude should pass ;
So that on one side, they all turn the face
The castle towards, and to Saint Peter's go ;
But on the other go towards the Mount.

30

On either side upon the livid rock
I could see hornéd devils with great whips
Who flogged them from behind most cruelly.
Oh, how they forced them to lift up their legs
At the first stroke ! and hardly one of them
Did for a second or a third remain.

While I was moving, my regards on one
Were centred, and immediately I said :
“ I have not been without a sight of him ; ”
So to recall him I gazed earnestly,
And the good Master with me paused awhile,
Giving me leave a little to go back.
This scourged one thought he could conceal himself,
By holding down his face, but it served not :
For I said, “ Thou that lookest on the ground

40

² Enormous crowds flocked to the first Jubilee instituted by Pope Boniface 8th, in 1300. G. Villani says that 200,000 strangers were always in Rome during the year. A barrier was placed down the middle of the bridge of St. Angelo, to divide the going and returning streams of pilgrims visiting St. Peter's. The Mount is the Janiculum, and more especially that part on which the church of S. Pietro in Montorio stands. The castle is the castle of St. Angelo.

Unless the features borne by thee are false,
Art Venedico Caccianimico,³
But what has brought thee to such pungent pains?"

He then to me: "Reluctantly I tell:
But thy clear accent to it forces me,
Bringing remembrance of the former world.
I am the man who the fair Ghisola
To do the pleasure of the Marquis led,
However else the shameful story runs.
I am not here the only Bolognese:
Indeed this region so abounds in them,
That now are not so many voices found
'Sipa,' to say, 'twixt Reno and Savena:
And if for this thou lackest faith or proof,
Remember our avariciousness."
A demon struck him as he thus replied
With his lash, and cried out to him: "Begone,
Pandar, here are no women to be coined."
I, thereupon, my escort overtook;
And afterwards in few steps we arrived
At where a ledge projected from the rock.
On this we mounted with enough of ease,
Turned to the right upon its jutting stone,
And thus departed from these circling rounds.

When we were come where was an opening
Beneath, to give a passage to the whipped,
My guide said: "Stop, in order that may meet
Thy sight the faces of the others ill-born,
Whose countenances thou hast not yet seen,
Because they have along with us moved on."

³ A Bolognese who sold his sister to Obizzo 2nd of Este, Marquis of Ferrara.

The Reno and Savena run parallel to each other for a considerable distance, and between them lies Bologna. *Sipa* (now *sipo*) was used by the Bolognese instead of the usual *si*, or *yes* of Italy.

From the old bridge we looked upon the troop
 Which came towards us, from the other side, 80
 And whom the whip in the same manner flayed.
 Then my good lord, without request of mine,
 Said to me : " Note that lofty one who comes,
 And in his anguish sheds not any tear ;
 See what a royal bearing he retains !
 That one is Jason ; with stout heart and craft
 He of their fleece despoiled the Colchians.
 The isle of Lemnos in his course he took,
 After the women with bold cruelty
 To death had dedicated all their males ; 90
 There by his actions, and his smooth address
 Hypsipile the youthful he deceived,
 She who before had all the rest deceived,⁵
 Pregnant he left her there, and all alone :
 Such crime condemns him to such punishment,
 And for Medea, too, is vengeance worked.
 With him go those, who in like sort deceive.
 This of the first entrenchment is enough
 To know, and those who in it suffer pain."

We now advanced to where the narrow way 100
 The second line of rampart intersects,
 And makes it for another arch a butment.
 Hence we heard people who a low moan made
 In the next moat, with spattering from the mouth
 And striking of themselves, with their own hands.
 The banks were crusted with a mouldiness
 From vapours from below, which settle there,
 And gave offence both to the eye and ear.
 So deep the bottom is, that there is not
 Room to look down, unless one mounts the ridge, 110

⁵ In the murder of the males of Lemnos, Hypsipile, the queen of the island, deceived the other women by preserving the life of her own father, Thoas.

Upon the arch where highest is the rock.
 Thither we moved, and in the moat below
 People I saw who stifling were in filth,
 Which from the draught-houses of men seemed brought.

Below, while I was searching with mine eyes,
 I saw a head with filth so much bedaubed
 It showed not if it was of lay or clerk.
 It called to me : " What makes thee so intent
 'To gaze on me, of all the loathsome crew ?"
 Then I to him : " Because I recollect
 Before to have seen thee, when thy hair was dry ;
 Thou art Alessio Interminai of Lucca,
 Wherefore on thee, more than the rest, I look."
 Then he replied, and struck himself his head :
 " My flatteries have plunged me here below,
 With which I ne'er could satiate my tongue."

120

My leader next : " Endeavour to advance,"
 He said, " a little further on thy sight,
 So that the countenance may meet thy view
 Of that foul woman with dishevelled hair,
 Who with her filthy nails there tears herself,
 Now crouching down, now standing on her feet.
 That is the harlot Thais,⁶ who replied
 To her gallant, when he asked—' Have I thanks
 Largely from thee ?'—' Aye, marvellously large.'
 With this let our regards be satisfied."

130

⁶ Thais, the famous courtesan of Athens (introduced by Dryden in his "Alexander's Feast"), is here mentioned as if she were identical with the character of the same name and profession in the *Eunuchus* of Terence. The words in the play are—"Magnas vero agere gratias Thais mihi !"—"Ingentes" (act iii. sc. 1), which are seen translated in the text. The whole scene is a satire upon parasites, but Thais herself does not appear in it, and the words assigned to her by Dante are spoken by Gnatho. The passage is quoted as an instance of parasitical assentation by Cicero (*De Amicitia*, 98), where Dante may have seen it, and not in Terence, which would account for this mistake.

CANTO XIX.

THE SIMONISTS.—THE BURNING HOLES.—POPE NICHOLAS III.—
OTHER POPES.

O SIMON MAGUS, O his wretched tribe,
The things of God, which to integrity
Ought to be wedded, ye rapaciously
Adulterous make for silver and for gold.
Now sounded must the trumpet be for you,
Because in the third dungeon ye abide!

We were now over the succeeding depth,
Upon the stone ledge mounted in that part,
Which the mid foss exactly overhangs.
O Highest Wisdom, how great is the art,
Shown by thee in earth, heaven, and in hell ;
What just allotments does thy Power make !
I saw along the bottom, and the sides,
The livid rock pierced full of apertures,
Of the same bigness, and thèy all were round,
And not less ample seemed to me, nor more
Than those which in my beautiful St. John's
Are as a place for the baptizers made :
And one of which not many years ago

I broke for one who there was suffocating ;
Be this a seal to undeceive the world.¹

Forth from the mouth of each, outside appeared
The feet of some transgressor, and of his legs
Far as the calf ; the rest remained within.
With all of them, the feet were both in flames,
Wherefore the joints such fearful struggles made
As would have broken any bands or withes.
Like as the flame from every unctuous thing
Flickers upon the upper side alone,
With these so was it, from the heel to toe.

“ Who is that one, O Master, who so frets
Writhing, more than the others, his companions ;”
I said, “ and whom a redder flame does lick ?”
Then he : “ If thou wilt, I will carry thee
Below upon this bank, which lower lies,
To learn of him and his crimes from himself.”
Then I : “ It pleases me as much as thee.
Thou art my Lord, and know’st I do not stray
From thy desire ; and know’st what is not said.”

On the fourth rampart we had now arrived :
We turned, and on the left-hand side went down
Deep in the narrow perforated trench,
And the good master still upon his hip

¹ In Dante's time and down to 1579, there were four little wells, or places for the officiating priests to stand in, round the central font in the Baptistery of St. John at Florence ; and an arrangement for the same purpose still exists at Pisa. They served to protect the priests from the crowd, when it was usual for numbers to be baptized together at particular seasons. In the year of Dante's priorship it happened that some children were playing in the church, and a boy fell into one of these holes and got wedged in it, so as to be in danger of suffocation. People collected, and as they were wondering what could be done, Dante arrived, and with an axe broke open the place, and saved the boy's life. Probably this was afterwards imputed to him as an act of wanton sacrilege.

Retained me, till he brought me to the cleft
 Of him who showed his anguish with his legs.
 "Whoe'er thou art, that art turned upside down,
 O wretched spirit, like a stake in earth,"
 I thus began, "address me if thou canst."

I stood as does the friar to confess
 The vile assassin, who when he is fixed,
 Recalls him, to postpone the time of death.²
 Then he cried: "Art thou come, and on thy feet
 Art come, and on thy feet, O Boniface?³
 By many years the prophecy has failed.
 Art thou so quickly satiate with that,
 For which thou didst not fear to put deceit
 On the fair Dame, and then make waste of her?"

Became I upon this like those who stand,
 Not understanding what is said to them,
 When jeered at, and who know not their reply.
 Virgil then said: "Reply to him at once—
 'I am not he, I am not he, thou thinkest.'"
 And I made answer, as I was enjoined:
 At which the spirit tossed about his feet,
 And groaning and in accents of complaint
 He said: "What hast thou to enquire of me?
 If to know who I am, so troubles thee,
 That thou hast therefore crossed upon this bank;

² By the law of Florence the punishment of assassins was to be buried alive head downwards; and the attitude of Dante stooping to catch the answer to his question resembled that of the confessing priest at such an execution.

³ Dante is mistaken for Boniface 8th, who is expected to join the simoniacal Popes, but who did not die until 1303: and the marvel is that he is standing outside, and is not thrust head downwards into the hole to suffer the punishment of his crimes. The true time of his death is known according to the power of seeing future events which the souls have. (Inf. x. 100.) The fair Dame is the Church deceived and outraged by the manner in which Boniface procured his election to succeed Celestine 5th, and by his subsequent conduct in the Papacy.

Know that I was with the great robe invested,
 And that I was a son of the She Bear,⁴ 70
 So greedy to advance the She Bear's cubs,
 That on earth, wealth, and here myself I pouched.
 Beneath my head, the others are extended,
 Who have preceded me in simony,
 But hidden in the fissure of the rock.
 Down thither likewise shall I drop, what time
 He shall arrive, whom that thou wast I thought,
 When I that sudden question made to thee.
 But for more time I have had scorched my feet,
 And in this posture thus remained reversed, 80
 Than he with glowing feet shall planted be :
 For after him will come, of fouler deeds,
 From out the West, a Pastor without law,⁵
 Such that both him and me he will conceal :
 A second Jason,⁶ of whom one may read
 In Maccabees ; and as to him did yield
 His king, so France's ruler will to this."

I know not if I was too daring now,
 When I made answer to him in this mood :
 " Inform me how much treasure did demand 90
 Our Saviour from St. Peter at the first
 For putting in his custody the keys ?
 All he besought of him was : ' Follow me.'

⁴ This is Nicholas 3rd, of the Orsini family, who was notorious for his simony and nepotism : he expects to be driven deeper on the arrival of Boniface. Nicholas died in 1281, and therefore had been at the mouth of the hole for 19 years—whereas between the death of Boniface in 1303, and the arrival of Clement 5th, the next expected Pope, who died in 1314, there would be only 11 years.

⁵ Bertrand de Goth, a Gascon, and Archbishop of Bordeaux, became Pope as Clement 5th, in 1305. He purchased the tiara by complying with all the conditions of Philip the Fair, who by his intrigues had procured the nomination to the vacant see. He transferred the Papal court from Rome to Avignon.

⁶ Jason, who "laboured underhand to be High-priest, promising to the king 860 talents of silver." 2 Mac. iv. 7.

Asked not Matthias, Peter and the rest
 For gold or silver when he was elected
 To that place which the guilty soul had lost.
 Therefore remain for thy just punishment,
 And take good care of thine ill-gotten gold,
 Which against Charles' did render thee so brave :
 And if it were not, that forbids me still 100
 My reverence towards the keys supreme,
 Which thou didst hold in the glad life above,
 I should have used words yet more violent ;
 Because thine avarice afflicts the world,
 The good oppressing, raising up the bad.
 Shepherds like you beheld the Evangelist,
 When she that upon many waters sits,
 Was seen by him in harlotry with kings ;
 She who did with the seven heads appear,
 And had the token of the twice five horns 110
 While virtue to her husband gave delight.*
 Ye have made gods of silver and of gold,
 In nought ye differ from idolaters,
 But they to one, ye to an hundred pray.
 Ah, Constantine, of what ills was the cause,
 Not thy conversion, but the heritage
 Received at thy hands by the first rich Pope !”

The while I was delivering these words,
 Whether by anger or by conscience stirred,
 He violently struggled with his feet. 120
 I think that this was pleasing to my guide ;

⁷ Nicholas 3rd, presuming on his wealth, desired a marriage between his family and that of Charles of Anjou, and on the rejection of this proposal, became his bitter enemy.

⁸ In this place interpreted to mean the Seven Sacraments and the Ten Commandments, the benefits of which belong to the Church, when her Spouse, the Pope, is virtuous. (Rev. xvii.)

⁹ In allusion to the supposed donation of Italy to the Church of Rome by Constantine.

With looks contented the whole time he heard
The sound of my truth-telling sentences.
Whereon he lifted me in both his arms,
And after he had raised me to his breast,
Ascended by the path down which he came :
Nor tired to have me to himself close pressed,
Until he put me on the crown of the arch
Which from the fourth to the fifth bank is thrown.
He gently here deposited the load 130
Dear to him, on the steep and rugged rock,
Which would have been for goats no easy pass ;
From hence another foss came into view.



CANTO XX.

THE DIVINERS AND MAGICIANS.—THE TWISTED HEADS.—MANTO

I MUST make verses on new punishments,
And furnish matter for the twentieth song
Of the first lay, which treats of the down-sunken.
I was already standing all intent
To look into the fresh discovered deep
Which by laments of agony was bathed :
And I saw people through the circling foss,
Weeping, in silence moving at the pace
Of Litany processions in this world.
When on them lower down my vision fell,
In wondrous sort appeared to be transposed
Each from the chin to where the chest begins,
For to their backs their visages were turned ;

Backwards they were obliged to take their steps,
For seeing forwards was denied to them.
Perchance ere now by palsy's influence
Some may have been entirely thus transformed,
But such I never saw, nor think can be.

Reader, if God permits thee to gain fruit
From this thy reading, thou mayst well conceive 20
I could not keep my face by tears unwet,
When, close to me, such semblance of man's form
I saw so twisted, that the weeping eyes
At their division bathed the hinder parts.
Truly I wept, supported by a crag
Of the rough bridge, in such sort that my guide
Said to me : " Art thou with the other fools ?
Here pity lives, when it is wholly dead.
Who can show greater wickedness than he, 30
Whose passion by the will of God is moved ?
Lift up thy head, and see the man¹ for whom
The earth was opened in the sight of Thebes,
Wherefore all cried : ' O whither sinkest thou,
Amphiaraus, why dost leave the fight ?'
And ceased not rushing downwards to the deep
Till he reached Minos, who lays hold on all.
Mark how his breast is of his shoulders made ;
Because he wished to see before too much,
He looks behind, and has a backward gait.

" Behold Tiresias,² who changed his form 10
When from a man a woman he became,
In all his members suffering a change :
And first he was compelled again to touch

¹ Amphiaraus, one of the seven kings who besieged Thebes. He was an augur, and gave oracles after his death. The passage is taken from Statius, *Thebais*, viii. 84.

² Tiresias, the prophet of Thebes, whose sex was changed, and recovered at the end of seven years, as here related.

The two entwining serpents with his rod,
Before he could recover his male plumes.

“That is Aruns,³ with back towards him turned,
Who in the hills of Luni (where do till
The Carrarese, who have their homes below),
Midst the white marble rocks a cavern had
For his abode; from whence to gaze on stars 51
And sea, uninterrupted was the view.
And she that has her bosom covered over,
Which thou canst not see, by her flowing hair,
And has her tresses growing on that side,
Was Manto,⁴ who through many lands had searched,
Before she fixed her seat where I was born;
Of which I would that thou shouldst something hear.

“After her father had from life departed,
And when the town of Bacchus was enslaved,
She for a long time wandered through the world. 60
High in fair Italy there lies a lake
Beneath the mountains which lock in Almain,
Above the Tyrol; and is called Benaco;
I think that in a thousand streams is washed
Pennino, ’twixt Camonica and Garda,
By waters afterwards gathered in that lake.
There is a place in midst, where the Trentine
Bishop, and they of Brescia and Verona
Might stand to bless, if on that way they went.
Peschiera stands, a fortress strong and fair, 70

³ Aruns was a Tuscan soothsayer. Lucan, *Phars.* i. 586.

⁴ Manto, daughter of Tiresias, and herself a prophet, left Thebes (the city of Bacchus) when it was enslaved by Creon. The following passage describes the origin of the waters of the Mincio in the Pennine Alps, and their course through the Lago di Garda (formerly Benaco) to Mantua—a place important here as the birthplace of Virgil. The dioceses of Trent, Verona, and Brescia meet at a place called Prato della Fame.

To check the Brescians and Bergamese,
At that part where the shore is the least steep ;
Here, of necessity all that flows over
Which can no more lie in Benaco's lap ;
And now a river is through pastures green.
Soon as the water gains a head to run,
No more Benaco, it is Mincio called
Down to Governo, where it meets the Po.
Not long its course is, ere it finds a plain
Where it extends, and forms of it a marsh, 80
And becomes pestilent in summer time.
The savage virgin wandering by this place,
Noted the land surrounded by the fen
As void of culture and inhabitants :
There to escape the company of men
She with her servants stayed, to work her art,
And lived there, and there left her body dead.
The people, thinly spread round, afterwards
Together drew in this place, which was strong
By reason of the marsh on every side. 90
They built a city over her dead bones,
And after her, who did the place erst fix,
They called it Mantua, without other lot.
Its population was one time more thick,
Before the foolishness of Casalodi,⁵
From Pinamonte had endured deceit.
And thus I warn thee, that if e'er thou hearest
The origin of my town differently,
No falsehood may deceive thee in the truth."

Then I said : " O my Master, thy discourse 100
To me so true is, and so binds my faith,

⁵ Albert of Casalodi, Lord of Mantua, was persuaded by Pinamonte de' Buonacossi, in 1269, to banish a part of the nobles who supported him : upon which the remainder were put to death by the popular party headed by Pinamonte, who obtained Mantua for himself.

That others with me as quenched brands will be.
 But tell me of the people as they pass,
 If thou seest any one deserving note;
 For only upon this my mind is bent.”
 Then said he to me: “He that from his cheek
 Lets fall his beard upon his shoulders brown,
 Was (what time Greece was emptied of its males,
 So that none hardly in their cradles stayed,)
 An augur, and with Calchas chose the time, 110
 At Aulis to dis sever the first rope:
 His name Eurypylus,⁶ and of this sings
 In one part of it my high Tragedy;
 Thou know’st it well, for thou dost know the whole.

“That other one, so spare about the flanks,
 Was Michael Scott,⁷ who in all verity
 Knew well the art of the magician’s frauds.
 See Guido Bonatti; Asdenté see,
 Who, that he had to leather stuck and thread,
 Ere now has wished, too late in his remorse. 120
 Behold those wretches, who the needle left,
 And spool and spindle, to turn sorceress,
 And work their charms with herbs and images.
 But come thou now; already skirts the bounds
 Of the two hemispheres, and meets the sea
 Underneath Seville, with his faggots, Cain;⁸

⁶ Virgil, *Æneid*, ii. 114.

⁷ Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie, d. 1291, was in his youth astrologer to Frederick 2nd. He translated and commented on Aristotle, and wrote several treatises on natural science. See notes to Scott’s *Lay of the Last Minstrel*.—Guido Bonatti, the astrologer of Forlì, was much consulted by Guido da Montefeltro (*Inf.* xxvii.) He is said to have made a brazen figure which answered questions: and is mentioned as an astrological writer by Sir T. Browne, *Vulgar Errors*, iv. 12. Some of his works have been printed, and his *Treatise on Astronomy* was translated by William Lilly, the English astrologer, in 1676.—Asdente was a shoemaker of Parma, who left his trade to practise divination.

⁸ Cain is the Man in the Moon; and it is indicated that the moon is setting in the west.

And the moon yester even was at full :
Thou must remember, she assisted thee
Before in the recesses of the wood."

So speaking, at the same time we advanced.



CANTO XXI.

THE TRAFFICKERS —THE BOILING PITCH —THE MALEBRANCHÉ
DEMONS

FROM one bridge to the other, thus in talk
Of which my Comedy cares not to sing,
We came, and stood upon its summit, where
Paused we to look into the other cleft
Of Malebolgé, and more vain laments :
And I saw it was marvellously dark.

And as in the Venetian arsenal
In winter season, boils the sticky pitch,
Their vessels to repair, which are not sound,
And cannot put to sea ; and in that time
One all his ship renews, another caulks
The sides of one that has made many a voyage :

Some hammer at the prow and some the poop ;
Others shape oars, and others twist the shrouds,
Or renovate the main and lesser sail.
So not by means of fire but by art divine,
Boiled in this depth a viscous bitumen,
Which clung around tenacious to the sides.
It I could see, but nothing in it saw
Saving the bubbles, which the boiling raised, 20
As swelled they each, and then collapsing sank.

While I in wonder fixed was looking down,
My guide, exclaiming : " Have a care, take heed !"
Pulled me towards himself, from where I stood.
Then I turned round, as does a man who waits
To see a thing, from which he ought to fly,
But whom a sudden terror robs of nerve,
So that to look he does not stop his flight.
Behind us, a black devil I could see
Approaching us upon the rocky bridge ; 30
Ah me ! how terrible a look he wore !
And in what cruel aspect was he seen,
With open wings, and swift upon his feet !
His shoulders, which were angular and high,
A sinner by the haunches did support,
Whom by the sinews of the legs he grasped.
He cried : " O Malebranché of our bridge,
Behold one of the ancients of Saint Zita :¹
Drag him below, for I again return
To that land, which is well stocked with the like ; 40
Except Bonturo,² all men there are cheats ;
For money *No* is made to turn to *Yes*."
Beneath he flung him, and by the rough bridge
Returned, nor ever was a mastiff loosed

¹ One of the senators of Lucca, on the Serchio, where Saint Zita is still venerated.

² Bonturo de' Dati is ironically excepted.

More swift in the pursuing of a thief.
The other plunged, and came up all defiled ;
Whereon the fiends, who were beneath the bridge,
Cried : " This is no place for the Holy Face,³
Nor canst thou swim as in the Serchio.
And therefore unless thou our hooks wouldst feel, . 50
Take care thou dost not rise above the pitch."
And then they seized him with an hundred forks ;
Saying : " In covert thou must range about,
And if thou canst, mayst plunder secretly."
Not otherwise a cook his servitors
Makes in the middle of the pot force down
The meat with flesh-hooks that it may not float.

Then the good Master : " Lest it should be seen
That thou art here," he said, " now sit low down
Behind a crag, that may some shelter give : 60
And for offence, which may be done to me,
Fear not, to me it is a thing well known ;
The other time, I met with some such strife."

Advanced he then beyond the bridge's crown,
And when he was arrived on the sixth bank
Need was for him to keep a daring front.
With such a fury, and in such a storm,
As when dogs out upon a beggar rush,
Who sudden asks for alms, where he makes halt,
Issued they forth from underneath the bridge, 70
And turned against him all their crooked pikes.
But he cried to them : " None of ye be rash ;
Before your pitch-fork seizes hold on me,
Let one of ye come forward, and give ear,

³ A celebrated effigy of the Saviour in the cathedral at Lucca. " By the Holy Face of Lucca " was a favourite oath of William the Conqueror. " By the Rode of Lukes ! " (the Rood of Lucca) occurs in the Vision of Piers Ploughman (8997, Wright's edition).

And then let him of hooking me debate."
They all cried out : " O Malacoda, go !"
One then stood forth, the others kept their ground,
And came to him, and said : " What boots it thee ?"

" Dost think, O Malacoda, thou wouldst see me
Hither arrived," my Master said to him, 80
" Thus far protected from all your attacks,
Without the Will Divine, and favouring fate ?
Let me proceed ; in heaven it is willed
That I should show another this wild way."

Thereon his fury was so much subdued,
That at his feet he let his hook fall down,
And to the rest cried : " He must not be struck."
Then said my guide to me : " O thou that sittest
Crouching among the rocks upon the bridge,
Securely thou mayst come to me again." 85

On this I moved and quickly came to him ;
And all the devils threw themselves in front,
So that I feared they would not keep their word.
And thus I once the soldiers saw, in fear,
Who under treaty from Caprona⁴ marched,
Finding themselves among such deadly foes.
With all my body, I myself drew close
Beside my Master, and turned not mine eyes
From off their faces, which were nowise good.
Their hooks they lowered, and : " Shall I prick him," 90
One to the other said, " upon the haunch ?"
And answered : " Aye, contrive to tackle him."

⁴ Caprona, a Pisan stronghold upon the Arno, was in 1290 besieged and taken by the men of Lucca, together with the other Guelphs of Tuscany. Their water failing them, the garrison marched out under a safe-conduct, but were pressed upon by the country people, crying, " Hang them ! hang them ! " Dante must have been present with the Florentine forces.

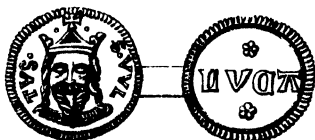
But then the demon, who had held discourse
 With my conductor, quickly flew to us,
 And said: "Be still, be still, Scarmiglione!"
 Then said to us: "To pass along on this
 Bridge is not possible; because is laid
 Below in ruins all the sixth arch thrown:
 And if on further progress ye are bent,
 Ye must advance upon this ridge of rock,
 Another bridge is near which gives a way;
 Five hours later than it is now, yesterday,
 One thousand, hundreds two, and sixty-six
 Years had elapsed, since there the way was broken.^a
 Some of my troop towards that part I send
 To watch lest any of them respite take:
 Go with them, for they will not do ye harm.
 Come forward, Alichino, Calcabrina,"
 He then called out, "and thou Cagnazzo too,
 And Barbariccia to lead the ten;
 Let Libicocco go too, Draghinazzo,
 The tuskéd Ciriatto, Graffiacané,
 With Farfarello, and mad Rubicanté.
 Search all around the boiling bitumen;
 Be these protected to the other bridge
 Which all unbroken leads across the pits."

"Ah me! O Master, what is this I see,"
 I said, "O let us without escort go,
 Thou know'st the way, I ask it not for me.
 If thou art as observant as thy wont,
 Dost thou not notice, how they grind their teeth,
 And how they threaten with their eyebrows harm?"
 Then he to me: "I would not have thee fear;

^a That is, by the earthquake at the ninth hour upon the death of Christ: and adding 34 (our Saviour's age at the Crucifixion) to 1266, gives 1300, the year of Dante's descent; while Good Friday is indicated as the day upon which it was commenced.

Let them according to their pleasure grin,
They do so, at the boiling sufferers."

Upon the rampart, to the left we turned ;
Not before each one had his tongue compressed
Between his teeth, in signal to their chief :
And he the trumpet sounded from his rear.



CANTO XXII.

THE TRAFFICKERS CONTINUED.—THE NAVARRESE.—THE GAME
WITH THE DEMONS.

I HAVE seen cavalry move in the field,
Engage in battle, and display their force,
And I have sometimes seen them in retreat ;
I have seen skirmishers in your domain,
O Aretines ; and foragers seen rove ;
Seen tournaments fought, and seen tiltings run,
Either at sound of trumpet, or of bells,¹
By drums, or signallings from fortress made,
With things both national and outlandish ;
But never to such strange wind instrument,
Have I seen moving cavalry or foot,
Nor ships by beacons on the land, or stars.

10

With the ten Demons we together went ;
Ah ! dreadful company ! but—" In a church
With saints, with gluttons in an eating-house."
All my attention on the pitch was bent,
To note the whole appearance of that deep,

¹ A tower upon wheels accompanied the Florentine and other forces to the field, and from it signals were given by a bell. The bell also sounded for one month previous to an expedition.

And of the people who within it burned.
Like to the dolphins, when they give a sign
To sailors by the bowing of their backs,
To make them ready, to preserve their ship ;
So here, his torture to alleviate,
One of the sinners would expose his back,
Then quick as lightning, draw it in again.
And as along the edge of a wet ditch,
With their mouths only seen the frogs abide,
Concealing thus their bodies and their limbs,
So were the sinners posted all around ;
But soon as Barbariccia drew near,
So they retreated under the hot flood.

I saw (my heart yet trembles at the thought)
One who remained, as it may so fall out
That one frog stays, when all the rest have fled :
And Graffiacané, who was nearest to him,
Uphooked him by his pitch-entangled hair,
And dragged him out, he like an otter looking.
Already was I of their names aware,
For I had marked them, when they were picked out,
And then had heard how they each other called.
“ O Rubicanté, manage thou to lay
Thy claws upon his back, and tear his hide !”
Cried out together all these curséd ones.

Then I : “ O Master, if thou canst, contrive
To learn who may be this unfortunate,
Delivered to his adversaries' hands.”
My Master then approaching to his side,
Asked whence he was ; on which he made reply :
“ I in the kingdom of Navarre was born,
My mother made me servant to a lord,
She that had borne me to a worthless one,
Destroyer of himself and his affairs.

The good king Thibault ² afterwards I served :
 Here I betook me to ill trafficking,
 Reason for which I render in this heat !”
 And Ciriatto, from whose mouth there grew,
 Like to a boar's, on either side a tusk,
 Caused him to feel how one of them could rip.
 The mouse had fallen among cruel cats :
 But Barbariccia took him in his grasp,
 And said : “ While I transfix him, all stand back ;” ⁶⁰
 And to my Master, turning then his face,
 He said : “ Ask further, if thou wishest more
 To know, ere by the others he is torn.”

My guide then : “ Of the other guilty ones
 Knowest thou any, that Italians are,
 Beneath the pitch ?” Then he : “ I have broke off
 Newly from one a neighbour of that land :
 Would that I were again with him enclosed,
 And then nor hook nor talon should I fear.”
 Then Libicocco : “ Too much we endure,” ⁷⁰
 He said, and with his hook, seized on his arm,
 So that in struggling, he a muscle tore ;
 And Draghinazzo would have taken hold
 Upon his legs ; but their Decurion
 Turned round upon them, with a frowning look.

Soon as they were a little pacified,
 Of him, who yet was gazing on his wound,
 My leader question made without delay :
 “ Who was the one from whom such hapless leave
 Thou say'st thou hast taken on the shore to come ?” ⁸⁰
 And he made answer : “ It was Fra Gomita—” ³

² Thibault 2nd, king of Navarre, d. 1270. Ciampolo has been preserved as the name of this barterer.

³ A Sardinian monk, who abused the confidence of Nino de' Visconti, whose deputy he was, as judge or governor of Gallura, one of the

He of Gallura, vessel of all fraud ;
He in his power had his master's foes,
And so, that they all praised him, treated them :
Money he took, and left them at their ease,
As they besought him, and in other things
Was not a small, but a great trafficker.
Frequents with him, the Lord Michel Zanché⁴
Of Logodoro ; converse of Sardinia
To hold, their tongues are never wearying. 90
Ah me ! look on that other how he grins :
More would I tell, but am in fear that he
Makes himself ready to claw off my skin."
Their officer to Farfarello turned,
Who rolled his eyes as if about to strike,
And said : " On one side stand, thou wicked bird."

" If ye have any wish to see or hear,"
Close by began again that frightened soul,
" Tuscans or Lombards, I will make them come.
But let the Malebranché stand aside, 100
That of their vengeance they may have no fear :
And I remaining in this self-same place,
For one that I am, will make seven come,
When I shall whistle as our custom is,
To make the others any time come out."
Upon these words Cagnazzo raised his face,
Wagging his head ; and said : " His mischief note,
He has a project to leap in below."
The other then, abundant in device,
Answered : " I am indeed on mischief bent, 110
Since I cause greater suffering to my friends."

four judicatures or districts under which the Pisans governed the island.

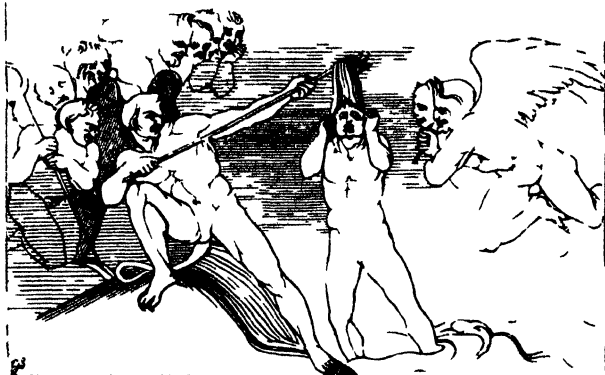
⁴ Zanché was steward to, and afterwards husband of, Adelisia, the widow of Enzo, titular king of Sardinia, and a natural son of Frederick 2nd. Logodoro was another of the judicatures of Sardinia.

Alichin could not hold himself, and 'gainst
The others, said to him : " If thou descend,
I shall not after thee with running come,
But I shall wave my wings above the pitch :
Leave him the top, and be the bank between,
To see if thou alone can match with us."

Now, Reader, thou shalt hear of a new sport.
Each from the other side his eyes withdrew,
He first, that was least keen in the affair. 130
The Navarrese selected well his time,
Pressed to the earth his feet, and in a trice
Leaped, and from their proposal thus escaped :
At this they all immediately grew mad,
But most he that was cause of the mischance.
Forward he sprang, exclaiming : " You are caught !"
Nought it availed, for with his terror wings
Could not keep pace, and he escaped below ;
The other, flying, upwards turned his breast :
Not otherwise than when a duck at once, 131
As nears the falcon to her, dives beneath,
While he flies up, defeated and provoked.

Then Calcabrina, at the cheat enraged,
Followed behind him flying, and well pleased
He should escape, that there might be a brawl.
And when the trafficker had disappeared,
On his companion he his talons turned,
And was engaged with him above the foss.
The other was a hawk most vigorous
To grapple fastly with him, and the two 140
Fell in the middle of the boiling pool.
The heat was a most sudden separator,
But it was vain for them to try to rise,
Their wings were so embarrassed by the pitch.
Then Barbariccia pitying, and the rest,

Caused fly four of them, to the other side,
With all their grapples, and immediately
Each from his place departed to that gaol.
They stretched their hooks out to the entangled ones,
That were already scalded through the skin ;
And so we left them in this wise embroiled.



CANTO XXIII.

ESCAPE FROM THE DEMONS—THE HYPOCRITES—THE GUIDED
CLOAKS—CATALANO AND LODERINGO—ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS

SILENT, alone, and without company
We went, one first, the other afterwards,
Like Minor Friars, when upon their way.
On one of Æsop's fables now were turned
My thoughts, engaged upon the recent strife;
Where he discourses of the frog and mouse,¹
For "*and*" and "*also*" are not more alike,
Than one thing to the other, when compared
From first to last, by an attentive mind

¹ This is a fable in which the frog entices the mouse into the water, and both are carried off by a kite. It is, however, not one of Æsop's

And as one fancy from another springs, 10
So of this one, there came another forth,
Which double in me made my former fear.
Thus thought I to myself: "These by our means
Are made ridiculous, with both loss and mocks
In such wise, as I think must make them chafe.
If to their evil nature they add rage,
'They will come after us more bloodthirsty
Than dog is for the hare, whom he has seized."

Already I felt bristling all my skin 20
With fear, and listening I backward hung;
And I said: "Master, unless thou conceal
Quickly thyself and me, I hold in fear
The Malebranché; they are yet behind,
And I imagine that I feel them now."
'Then he: "If I were made of silvered glass,
Thine outward image could not be conveyed
Sooner to me, than the within I see.
E'en now with mine thy meditations mix
With the same action, and the same design, 30
So that between us twain they make one will.
If it be true, that here the right bank slopes,
So that upon the other rampart we can climb,
We shall escape from their imagined chase."

He had not finished giving this advice,
When I perceived them coming with spread wings,
Not far from us, on seizing us intent.
My leader suddenly laid hold on me,
Like to a mother, wakened by the sound,
Who seeing close to her the burning flames,
Snatches her boy up, flies, and does not stay, 40
Having for him more care than for herself,
Even so long as to put on a dress.
From off the summit of the rugged bank

Face upwards he slid down on the steep rock
Which on one side the other foss includes.
Courses so swift no water through the trough
To turn the wheel round, of an upland mill,
Near to the float-boards when it makes approach,
As did my Master down along that bank,
Bearing me with him, placed upon his breast, "
More like unto his son than his companion.
His feet were hardly rested on the ground
At bottom, when upon the top they came
Above us: but this caused him no alarm,
For the high Providence which has decreed
In the fifth foss to place them ministers,
Has stripped them of all power to go thence.

Down there we found a people painted o'er,
Who with most tardy steps were pacing round,
Weeping, and seeming overcome and weary. "
Mantles they wore with hoods descending low
Before their eyes, and cut in the same shape,
As for the monks of Cologne they are made.
Upon the outside they are gilt and shine,
But all within of lead, and of such weight,
That by them Frederick's² would seem light as straw.
O weary mantle for eternity!
Here we a turn made on the left hand side,
Together with these, hearing their sad moans;
But by their load fatigued, this family 70
So slowly went, that we were ever new
In company at every step we took.

Whence, to my leader, I: "See that thou find
Some one renowned or by his name or deeds;

² It was a punishment of Frederick 2nd to wrap state criminals in sheet lead and throw them into a heated cauldron.

And as thou goest, throw thine eyes around.”
 Then one who understood the Tuscan tongue
 After us called out: “Stay awhile your feet,
 Ye that are speeding through the dusky air:
 Perchance ye may from me gain, what ye seek.”
 Then turned my leader round, and he said: “Wait;⁹⁰
 And then proceed observant of his pace.”

I stayed, and I saw two who showed great wish
 Of mind to join me, in their countenances;
 But hindered them the load, and narrow way.
 When they came up with us, with eyes askance
 On me they looked, but never said a word;
 Then they turned round, and with each other spoke:
 “One seems alive by the action of his throat;
 And if they are dead, by what privilege
 Go they uncovered by the heavy stole?”⁹⁰
 To me then: “Tuscan, who to this assemblage
 Of the sad hypocrites art now arrived,
 Disdain not to inform us who thou art.”
 And I to them: “Born was I and grew up
 In the great city on fair Arno’s stream,
 And in the body am, which aye I had.
 But who are ye, to whom distils so much,
 As I perceive, of anguish down your cheeks;
 What is your pain to cause this glistening?”
 And one replied to me: “These yellow cloaks¹⁰⁰
 Are made of lead, so heavy that their weight
 The balances in this way makes to groan.
 We, Joyous Friars³ were, and Bolognese;

³ This was a name derisively given to the Brothers of the Military Order of the Blessed Mary instituted by Urban 4th (1261—1264). Their rule permitted them to marry, to live in the world, and to hold property. The order did not last long. Catalano and Loderingo, both of Bologna, the one a Guelph and the other a Guibeline, were jointly invested with the chief magistracy of Florence in 1266. The Guibelines were then in power, but associated a Guelph with one of their own party, in order

I Catalano, Loderingo he,
 By name; together chosen by thy land,
 Where they are wont to choose a single man
 Their quiet to preserve; and such were we
 As may be yet in the Gardingo seen."

I then broke out: "O Brethren, your evil—" 110
 But said no more, for now there met mine eyes
 One crucified by three stakes to the ground.
 When me he saw, to writhe about he fell,
 And in his sighs was breathing through his beard:
 Then Catalano, who on this came up,
 Said to me: "This transfix'd one, whom thou seest,
 Counsell'd the Pharisees, that it were good,
 That one man for the people should be slain.
 Naked he is, and laid across the path
 As thou dost see, and of need must he feel 120
 The weight of each before he passes by.
 In the like mode is laid his father-in-law,
 In this foss, and the other counsellors,
 Who were the cause of evil to the Jews."

Virgil I could perceive now wondering⁴
 (Over the man who on the cross was strained,
 So vilely outcast for eternity:
 Then to the Brother in this wise he spoke:
 "Would it might please thee, if allowed, to tell
 If on the right hand, any passage lies,

to conciliate the Guelfs, at that time generally dominant in Italy after the defeat of the other side, under Manfred at Benevento. When in office they plotted secretly with the Guelfs; the Guibelines were driven from the city, and the houses of the great Uberti family, situated in the quarter called the Gardingo, were burnt and destroyed. It was the general custom in the free cities of Italy to intrust the executive power to citizens of other states in order that its administration might not be under the influence of local jealousies.

⁴ Virgil is surprised by seeing Caiaphas and Annas (John xviii. 13), who were not here at the time of his former descent.

By which we two may possibly go forth,
Without resorting to the angels black,
Who came to aid our going from their foss.”
He answered : “ Nearer than thou dost expect,
A rock at hand is, which from the great round
Proceeds, and bridges over the dread deeps ;
But here is broken, and no passage gives :
Yet can ye clamber by the ruined mass
That lies on one side, on the bottom piled.”

130

Awhile my leader stood, with head inclined ;
Then said : “ He taught us most deceitfully,
He who the sinners upon that side hooks.”
The Brother then : “ I heard told at Bologna
The devil’s many vices ; with the rest
That he a liar is, and sire of lies.”

140

On this my guide with rapid strides advanced,
Something disturbed by anger in his face :
Then from these laden souls, I took my way,
Following the prints of those beloved feet.

CANTO XXIV.

THE THIEVES.—THE SERPENTS.—THE BURNING TO ASHES

IN that division of the youthful year
When in Aquarius cools his rays the sun,
And when the nights approach the equinox ;
What time the hoar-frost copies on the ground
Of her white sister the similitude,
But short time lasts the vigour of her pen ;¹
The husbandman, whose stores begin to fail,
Rises, looks forth, and notices the plain
All whitened ; upon which he strikes his thigh,
Reseeks his cottage, up and down complains
Like a poor wretch who knows not what to do :
Returns again, and all his hope resumes,
Seeing how altered is the face of earth
In little space ; and taking up his switch,
Drives forth his cattle to their pasturage.
E'en so, the Master made me to despond,
Perceiving that his face was thus disturbed,
And e'en so quick, he brought the remedy :
For to the ruined bridge when we approached,
My guide turned to me with that countenance
Of sweetness, at the mountain's foot first seen.

¹ As it thaws, the resemblance of the hoar-frost to snow wears out.

His arms he opened, after some resolve
With himself taken, having first surveyed
The ruin well, and then on me laid hold :
And like a man who works, and calculates,
Providing for the future ever seen ;
In like sort, when he raised me to the crown
Of some huge mass, another stone he chose,
And would say : " On this must thou next lay hold ;
But first essay, if it will bear thy weight." 30

It was no way for one robed in a cloak,
For hardly we, he light, and I assisted,
From resting place to resting place could mount :
And if it had not been that on this side,
Than on the other, shorter was the slope,
For him I know not, but I must have failed.
But because Malebolgé towards the mouth
Of its lowest pit inclines continual,
It so affects the planning of each foss,
That high one side is, and the other low. 40

Finally we arrived upon the place,
From which the last stone had been broken off :
My breath was so exhausted in my lungs,
When I was up, that I could do no more.
And so immediately I sat me down.
" Needful 'tis now, that thou exert thyself,"
The Master said : " by lying upon down
No fame is won, nor under coverlets ;
Without which he that does his life consume,
Leaves of himself on earth such vestiges 50
As smoke in air, or in the water foam.
Therefore arise, and vanquish this fatigue
With courage, which in every battle wins,
Unless by the gross body overcome.
There is a longer stair which thou must climb :

"Tis not enough to have escaped from these :
If thou dost note, apply it for thy good."
On this I rose, to show myself supplied
Better with breath than, as I felt, I was ;
And said : " Proceed, for I am strong and bold." 61

Above upon the rock we took our way ;
It was uneven, narrow, difficult,
And much more rugged than the former one.
Not to seem faint, I talked as on I went ;
On which came from the other foss a voice
That was not able to define its words.
I know not what it said, though on the crown
I now was of the arch, which thither led,
But he who spoke appeared to anger moved. 70
Downwards I turned my sight, but human eyes
Could not the bottom fathom, through the dark :
Wherefore I : " Master, prithee now advance
To the next round ; let us the bank descend ;
As hence I hear, but cannot understand,
So I look down, but nothing can discern."
" No other answer I return," he said,
" Than doing it, for a becoming suit
Should work its own fulfilment, silently."

Down on the bridge we went, towards the end,
With the eighth rampart where it is united, 80
And then the hollow to me lay disclosed :
Within it I could see a fearful swarm²
Of serpents, and of such diversity,
The memory of it freezes yet my blood.
Libya cannot in her sands boast more ;
Though she her land and water serpents, asps,

² Imitated from an ophiological passage in Lucan. *Pharsalia*, ix.
706.

And spotted snakes, and amphisbœnas rear ;
Nor such a terrible and monstrous plague,
With Ethiopia to boot, e'er showed,
Or with the land which lies on the Red Sea.

90

Among this cruel, frightful multitude,
People were running, naked, horror-struck,
Without hope of escape, or heliotrope.³
With snakes they had their hands behind them bound ;
And passing through the loins these had the tail
And head, and were in knots entwined in front.
Lo ! now upon one, who was by our side,
Darted a serpent, on him fastening,
Where with the shoulders is the neck conjoined.
Nor *I* nor *O* can be more quickly writ,
Than he took fire, burned, and ashes all
Became, in act of falling to the ground.
And after on the earth he thus was strewn,
The ashes gathered up, and of themselves
Upon the instant, to the same returned.

100

Thus by great sages it is understood
The Phoenix dies, and rises up again,
When it arrives at the five hundredth year.
During its life, it eats not herb nor seed,
But only tears of incense, and amomum,
And its death-cradle is of nard and myrrh.

110

Resembling one, that falls and knows not how,
Or by a devil thrown upon the ground,
Or other seizure, which may take a man ;
Who when he rises, gazes round about,

³ The heliotrope or bloodstone was supposed to render the person wearing it invisible. This belief is introduced by Boccaccio in the tale of Calandrino. Decam. viii. 3.

From Ovid, *Metam.* xv. 392.

As all amazed at the great agony
Which he has undergone, and looking, sighs :
So was this sinner, after he was raised.
Ah ! how severe the justice of the Lord ;
That in its vengeance showers down such blows. 130
Questioned him then my Leader, who he was :
And he replied : “ I fell from Tuscany
Not long ago into these cruel jaws.
Pleased me a brutish life, and not a man’s,
As ’twould the mule I was ; I am Vanni Fucci ;⁵
A beast, Pistoia was my fitting den.”

I to my guide : “ Desire him to remain,
And ask what crime has sunk him thus so deep,
For him I knew a man of blood and wrath.”
The sinner who had heard, dissembled not, 140
But turned me his attention and his face,
And with a dreadful shame was overspread ;
Then said : “ It grieves me more, that me thou hast met
In misery, as here thou seest me,
Than when I from the other life was torn.
What thou demandest, cannot I refuse :
So low am I sent down, because I was
The thief of fair goods from the sacristy,
Of which another falsely was accused.
But lest thou shouldst in seeing me exult, 150
If ever thou escape from this dark place ;
Open thine ears to my presage, and hear.
Pistoia first will chase from it the Blacks :
Then Florence will its laws and people change ;
Mars will a vapour bring from Val di Magra
Enveloped in a hurricane of clouds

⁵ Vanni Fucci was the bastard son of a gentleman of Pistoia. He robbed the sacristy of the cathedral, in 1293, and falsely accused one Rampino of the theft. He appears to have been better known to Dante as concerned in crimes of violence.

And by a violent and impetuous storm
'Twill be encountered on Piceno's⁶ plain :
When from the cloud it will burst suddenly,
So that by it shall every White be struck.
Because it must distress thee, this I tell."

130

⁶ Campo Piceno near Pistoia, where in 1301 the Marquis Moroello Malaspina of Val di Magra, at the head of the exiled Blacks of Pistoia defeated the Whites. In the following year the Whites were expelled from Florence by Charles of Valois.

CANTO XXV.

THE THIEVES CONTINUED—CACUS—THE TRANSFORMATIONS
OF MEN AND SERPENTS.

THE robber on the ending of his words,
Raising on high both hands in act of scorn,
Cried : " This for thee, O God, for thee I show."
From thence the serpents were endeared to me,
For round his neck itself twined one of them,
As if it said : " I choose thou sayst no more : "
And round his arms another pinioned him
Clenching itself so tightly in the front,
That not the slightest movement could he make.

Alas ! Pistoia why dost not resolve 10
To burn thyself to ashes, thus to end,
Since in ill deeds thou dost surpass thy stock !¹
Through all the circles glimmering of hell,
I saw no soul to God so arrogant,—
Not him who toppled from the walls of Thebes.
He fled away, nor spoke another word :
And I perceived a Centaur full of rage
Come crying : " Where is, where the stubborn one ? "
Maremma, as I think, does not contain

¹ The ferocity of the men of Pistoia was popularly attributed to their supposed descent from Cataline's followers.

So many snakes as he had on his back,
At that part where the human form begins.
Above his shoulders, close behind the neck,
A dragon lay on him, with open wings,
And every one it meets it sets a-blaze.

Said to me my instructor : " This is Cacus,
Who underneath the rocks of Aventine,
Would oftentimes create a lake of blood :
He goes not with his brothers the same road,
Because of the deceitful thefts he made
From the great herd, which he had near to him :
For which his evil deeds came to an end
Under the club of Hercules, who in sooth
Gave him a hundred blows ; he felt not ten."

While he was speaking thus, he passed away,
And underneath us, there came spirits three,
Of whom nor I, nor was my guide aware,
Until they shouted forth : " Who may ye be ? "
And thereupon our conversation ceased,
And we were only upon them intent.
I knew none of them, but it so occurred,
As it might happen accidentally,
'That one occasion had to name another,
In saying : " Where can be Cianfa³ left ? "
Then I my guide's attention to secure,
My finger laid between the nose and chin.

Reader, if thou art slow to give belief
To what I now tell, 'tis not marvellous :
For I that saw it, hardly could consent,
Keeping my eyebrows lifted as I looked.

³ Cianfa de' Donati, of whom, as of the following persons, the name only has been preserved.

A serpent having six feet, flung itself 80
In front of one, and close adhered to him :
With its mid feet his body it embraced,
And with the forward pair it grasped his arms,
Then bit him on the one and other cheek :
The hinder parts it fixed upon his thighs,
And introducing 'twixt the two its tail,
It spread it out upon his loins behind.
Ivy was never yet so fast entwined
Around a tree, as did this horrid beast
With the other's members, interlace its own : 85
They clove together as if of melting wax
They had been made, and mingled all their forms :
And neither of them as before was seen.
So there creeps on before it bursts to flame,
Over a scroll of paper a brown hue,
Not wholly black, and the white colour dies.

The other two looked on, and each of them
Cried : " Ah me, Agnolo,³ how art thou changed !
Behold thou art not either one nor two."
Already had the two heads one become, 90
When the two visages were seen to mix
In one face, in which both of them were lost.
Of the four pieces, there became two arms ;
The thighs and legs, the belly and the chest,
Became limbs which were never seen before.
The whole appearance as at first was gone ;
And the distorted figure, two not one
Seemed, and in that shape went with paces slow.

Like as a lizard under the fierce scourge 95
Of the dog-days, in shifting its retreat,
Flashes like lightning, if it cross the path ;

³ Agnolo Brunelleschi.

So there appeared advancing to the fronts
 Of the two others, a small burning snake ⁴
 Livid and black as is a peppercorn :
 And that part by which earliest is drawn
 Our aliment, in one of them it pierced,
 Then fell down stretched before him on the ground.
 He that was pierced looked at it, but said nought ;
 Then standing rigidly began to yawn,
 As if by sleep or by a fever seized. 90
 He eyed the serpent, and the serpent him ;
 One from his wound, the other from the mouth
 Sent forth a thick smoke, and the two smokes met.

Let Lucan ⁵ now be silent, where he treats .
 Of poor Sabellus and Nasidius,
 And stay to listen to what I shall tell ;
 Ovid say nought of Arethuse or Cadmus ;
 If to a fountain her, him to a snake
 He change in poetry, I grudge it not :
 For at no time, two natures face to face 100
 Has he transmuted, so that both the forms
 Were ready to exchange their substances.
 Responded they in such wise mutually,
 That to a fork the serpent split its tail,
 And the pierced man together drew his feet.
 Each with the other of his thighs and legs
 So clove together, that the juncture soon
 No token left by which it could be traced.
 In twain the tail divided, took the shape
 Abandoned there ; and its integument 110
 Turned supple, while the other's became hard.
 Within the armholes I saw drawn the arms,
 And the two legs of the creature which were small
 Elongated as much as these grew short.

⁴ This is Guercio Cavalcante.

⁵ Phars. ix. 787.

Entwined together then the legs behind
Became the part, which is by man concealed,
And his the wretched one had cleft in twain.

Meanwhile the smoke the one and other clothed
With a new surface, generating hair
On this hand, on the other making smooth. 130
One raised itself, the other fell to earth,
Yet did they not avert the hideous eyes,
Beneath which each of them changed visages ;
He that stood up, drew his towards the brow,
And of the abundant matter which was there
The ears were formed upon the naked jowl :
That which went not behind, but was retained,
Of its excess gave to the face a nose,
And formed the lips as large as it was meet :
The other grovelling, forwards thrust the face, 130
Retracting withinside the head the ears,
Like as a snail disposes of its horns :
And the tongue which it had entire and short,
For speech adapted, split ; and the forked one
In the other closed : and there was no more smoke.
The spirit which was now a beast become,
Hissing, betook to flight along the foss ;
The other with ill words spat after him,
Then turned on him his new acquired back,
And to the third said : “ I would Buoso⁶ went, 140
As I have done to crawl upon the path.”

Beheld I thus the seventh hollow deep
Change and rechange ; and let me here excuse
The novelty, if somewhat roves my pen :
And notwithstanding that my eyes confused
Were in some measure, and my soul amazed,

⁶ Buoso degli Abati.

These could not make escape, so much concealed,
But that I made out Puccio Sciancato ;
The only one he of the three companions
Who at the first came, that was not transformed :¹⁹⁰
The third was he,⁷ whom mournest thou, Gaville.

⁷ Guercio Cavalcante was killed at Gaville near Florence, which laments the revenge taken for his death.

CANTO XXVI.

THE CRAFTY COUNSELLORS—THE WALKING FLAMES—DIOMEDE
AND ULYSSES.—THE LAST VOYAGE OF ULYSSES.

FLORENCE, rejoice because thou art so great,
That over sea and land thy wings are spread,
And thy renown extended throughout Hell.
Among the robbers I found five of note
Thy citizens, whence came on me a shame,
And thou from them great honour dost not win :
But if towards the morning one dreams true,
Thence thou wilt suffer, in a little time,
What Prato and the rest desire for thee :¹
If it were done, it were not done too soon ;
So let it be, since so it is to be,
Older when grown, it would oppress me more.

10

Here we departed : and up by the stair
Which erst the stones had lent for our descent,
Remounted, leading me with him, my guide ;
And following the solitary path

¹ The other towns will rejoice to see the coming misfortunes of Florence. In 1300, the Black and White factions commenced. In May 1304, a wooden bridge over the Arno broke down, while it was covered with people assembled to see a play of Hell and its torments. In June of the same year a great fire destroyed more than 1700 buildings, with much property and merchandise.

Among the rocks and fragments of the bridge,
Without the hands the feet no way could make.
I was afflicted, and am heavy yet,
'Turning on that which I had seen my thoughts, 20
My wishes reining, more than is my wont,
Lest they should stray, where virtue leadeth not ;
'That if a kind star, or some better thing
Has given me good, I might not blast myself.

Like as the hind reposing on a hill,—
What season he that lights the universe
Least scanty shows to us his countenance,
When to the gnat the fly is giving way,—
Below him in the valley sees fire-flies
Perchance where he his vineyards tends and ploughs ; 30
Resplendent with as many flames was all
The eighth compartment deep, when I could see,
Soon as I came to where the bottom showed.
And like as he who with the bears took vengeance,
Departing saw Elijah's chariot, 40
What time the horses rose to heaven erect,
So that he could not follow with his eyes,
And could see nothing but the flame alone
On high ascending, like a little cloud ;
Proceeding so was each along the gorge 50
Of this foss, so that none its prey disclosed,
And every flame a sinner did conceal.

To look, on tiptoe on the bridge I stood,
So that unless a rock had near me been,
Though never struck, I might have fallen down.
My guide who saw that I was so intent,
Then said : " The spirits are within the flames :
Wraps itself each, in that by which it burns."
Answered I : " O my Master, hearing thee
More sure I am, already though aware 60

'That thus it was, and so I would have said :
 Who is in that flame which divided comes
 Above, which from the pyre seems to ascend,
 Where Eteocles with his brother lay ?" ¹
 Answer he made : " Within it tortured are
 Diomede and Ulysses, thus together
 They run in punishment, as in their wrath :
 Within their flame, in anguish is deplored
 The ambush of the horse, which was the gate
 Whence issued forth the noble race of Rome. ⁶⁰
 Within they mourn the arts, for which though dead
 Deidamia still Achilles mourns ;
 And woe for the Palladium is endured." ²

" If possibly they can within these flames
 Hold converse," said I, " Master, I beseech,
 And beg my prayer may for a thousand count,
 That thou wilt not deny me to remain
 Until the hornéd flame shall hither come :
 See how towards them in desire I bend." ³
 He then to me : " Worthy is thy request ⁷⁰
 Of highest praise ; and therefore I receive it ;
 But thou, endeavour to restrain thy speech,
 Leave me to speak, for well I understand
 What thou wouldst have ; for they might be averse
 To thy speech haply, for that they are Greeks."

Then when the flame had so far made advance
 As to my leader seemed fit time and place,
 I heard him in this manner speak to it :

¹ The flames parted on the joint funeral pile of the hostile brothers, Eteocles and Polynices.—Statius, *Thebais*, xii. 481.

² Troy being taken by means of the Wooden Horse, Æneas went forth and founded Rome.—Achilles was discovered by the coming of Ulysses, and persuaded to go to Troy, leaving Deidamia at the court of her father Lycomedes.—The Palladium was stolen by Diomede and Ulysses.

“O ye, that are thus two within one flame,
 If I deserved of ye, what time I lived,
 If I deserved of ye, or more or less,
 When in the world I wrote the lofty verse,
 Remove not, but let one of ye relate
 Where by himself destroyed he sought his death.”

The larger horn of that flame ancient
 Began to flicker, with a whispering,
 Like to a flame when troubled by the wind :
 And then the summit moving to and fro,
 As if it were a tongue, that held discourse,
 A voice sent forth from it and said : “What time ⁹⁰
 From Circe I departed, who allured
 Me near Gaëta longer than a year⁴
 Before Æneas gave to it that name,
 Neither love for my son, nor piety
 To my old father, nor the affection due
 Which should have happy made Penelope,
 Within could overcome the burning thirst
 I had to be acquainted with the world
 And with the vice and virtue of mankind ;
 But I put forth on the deep open sea ¹⁰⁰
 Alone with one ship and that company
 Not numerous, by whom I was not left.
 One and the other shore I saw by Spain
 Down to Morocco and Sardinia's isle,
 And all the rest which that sea washes round.
 I and my company were old and spent
 When we arrived at that contracted strait
 Where Hercules his limits has prescribed,
 That further onwards man should not advance.
 Seville upon the right hand I had past, ¹¹
 And on the larboard I had Centa left :

⁴ So named by Æneas after his nurse Caieta, Æneid, vii. 1.

‘Brethren,’ I said, ‘who through a hundred thousand
Dangers have now attained unto the West,
In the so brief a time of wakefulness
Remaining to you, of your faculties,
Ye should not choose the knowledge to refuse,
Following the sun, of the unpeopled world.
Consider of your generation well :
Ye were not made as brutes to spend your lives,
But excellence and knowledge to pursue.’

190

“So keen I rendered my companions
For sailing onward, by this short address,
To hold them back I should have had much toil :
And towards the morning turning our poop,
Of oars we made wings for our unwise flight,
Making way always on the larboard side.
The constellations of the other pole
The evening saw, and ours so depressed
It did not rise from out the ocean floor.
Five times rekindled and as many quenched
The light was of the moon, to us below,
Since we had entered by the lofty straits,
When there loomed out on us a mountain, dark
In the distance, and it seemed to me so high
That such another I had never seen.
We were rejoiced, but soon to tears were turned,
For from the new found land a whirlwind rose,
And struck the foremost timbers of our ship :
With all the water, thrice it spun us round,
The fourth time lifted up the poop in air
And sank the prow, as to Another pleased,
Until at last the sea closed over us.”

170

140

So as to shadow Cervia with her wings.
 The town,⁵ which has ere now the long proof made,
 And of the French a sanguinary heap,
 Finds itself under the green clutches still :
 Verrucchio's mastiffs both the young and old,⁶
 Who on Montagna did destruction work,
 Where is their wont, make weapons of their teeth.
 The cities of Lamone and Santerno,
 The little lion of the white nest leads,⁵⁰
 Who changes sides 'twixt summer and the spring :⁷
 And that⁸ which has its strand by Savio washed,
 As 'twixt the mountain and the plain it lies,
 So between tyranny and freedom lives.
 Now I beseech thee tell me who thou art,
 Be not more obdurate than others are,
 So may thy name exalt itself on earth."

Soon as the flame had rustled for awhile,
 After its mode, the pointed summit waved
 Backwards and forwards, and in this wise spoke :⁶⁰
 " If I believed that my reply were made
 To one that would unto the world return
 With no more motion would this flame remain :
 But whereas never more from this abyss
 Returns there any, if I know the truth,

in their arms. Francesca of Rimini was of this house, and to it belonged Guido Novello da Polenta, Dante's last and best friend in exile.

⁵ Forlì, of which Guido was lord, was under siege for nearly a year by a Guef force, to which the pope Martin 4th contributed a number of French troops. The siege was raised by Guido with great slaughter in 1282. In 1296 Guido became a Cordelier or Franciscan friar, and Forlì passed into the power of the Ordellaffi, who bore a green lion.

⁶ Malatesta and his son, Lords of Rimini, whose castle was at Verrucchio near Rimini. They were Guefs, and Montagna dei Parcitati, a Guibeline leader, was murdered by them in prison.

⁷ Mainardo Pagani, who bore a lion on a white field, and was by turns Guef and Guibeline, was lord of Faenza upon the river Lamone, and of Imola on the Santerno.

⁸ Cesena on the Savio, sometimes ruled by its own citizens, sometimes by tyrants.

I answer thee without the fear of shame.
 A man of arms I was, then a Cordelier,
 Thinking if girdled thus to make amends :
 And certainly my thought had been fulfilled,
 But for the Prelate great, whom evil seize,
 Who to my first offences drove me back ;
 And how and wherefore I would have thee hear.

“ What time I was the form of flesh and bones
 Given me by my mother, my achievements
 Partook not of the lion but the fox.
 The cunning policies, the hidden ways,
 I knew them all and practised so their arts
 That to the world’s end did the fame resound.
 When at that part I found myself arrived
 Of my career when all men it behoves
 To strike their sails and gather in their ropes,
 What before pleased me filled me with disgust :
 And I became confessed and penitent,
 Ah wretched me ! and I should have been saved.

“ The leader of the modern Pharisees,⁹
 Who near the Lateran carries on his wars,
 And not with Saracens nor with the Jews,
 Whose every enemy a Christian was ;—
 To conquer Acre staid not one of them,
 Nor was a merchant in the Soldan’s land—
 Neither his office high, nor holy vows
 Saw in himself, nor yet in me that cord
 Its wearers wont to make more mortified.
 But like as Constantine ¹ Sylvester prayed

⁹ Boniface 8th. He proclaimed a crusade against the Colonna family—his personal enemies—whose palaces in Rome were near the Lateran ; but none against the Sultan and the renegades and Christian merchants who helped him to retake Acre in 1291.

¹ Upon the supposed occasion of the donation of Italy to Pope Sylvester.

To cure his leprosy within Soracté,
 So me as his physician he besought
 To cure him of the fever of his pride.
 Counsel he asked of me, but I was mute,
 Because his words as of a drunkard seemed.
 And then he said : ' Let not thy heart suspect ; 100
 For I absolve thee, and do thou instruct
 How I may Palestrina² overthrow.
 To lock and unlock heaven I am able,
 As thou dost know, for there are the two keys
 Which in no love my predecessor³ held.'
 Persuaded me these weighty arguments
 That to be silent were worst policy ;
 And I said : ' Father, since thou cleansest me
 From the sin which I am about to do ;
 Large promises with a fulfilment short 110
 Will make thee triumph on the holy throne.'

" After that I was dead, St. Francis came
 For me, but one of the black Cherubim
 Said to him : ' Take him not ; do me no wrong :
 Among my wretched ones he must descend ;
 Because he did the wily counsel give,
 From which time I have had him by the hair :
 He that repents not cannot be absolved,
 Nor can repentance with desire exist
 In contradiction which agreeth not.' 120

" O miserable me ! O how I trembled !
 When he seized hold on me, and said : ' Perchance

² Palestrina was the principal seat and last stronghold of the Colonna family. The place was pronounced impregnable by Guido, who was summoned to assist Boniface. This at first he refused to do : but upon a promise of full absolution, he advised the fraud which was put into execution. A negotiation was opened, and Palestrina was given up to the pope upon terms of full pardon and reconciliation : but by a flagrant breach of faith it was immediately destroyed, and the Colonna family driven into banishment. This was in 1298. ³ Celestine 5th.

Me a logician thou didst not suppose.'
To Minos he conveyed me ; and he wound
About his rigid back eight times his tail,
Then, as with furious rage he bit himself,
Said : ' He is sentenced to the hiding flames :'
Wherefore here, as thou seest, I am lost,
And going thus attired I lament."

When he had thus completed his discourse,
The flame complaining went upon its way
Waving and writhing round its pointed horn.
Onwards my leader and I too advanced
Upon the rock along the other arch.
Bridging the foss in which are paid their dues
To those who sowing discord, gather woe.

CANTO XXVIII.

THE FOMENTERS OF CIVIL DISCORD.—THE WOUNDS AND MUTI-
LATIONS.—MAHOMET.—CURIO.—MOSCA.—BERTRAND DE BORN.

Who is there, even with unshackled words,
Who could in full describe the wounds and blood
Which now I saw, though oft his tale were told?
Certainly every tongue must fall far short,
Through our powers of speech, and through the mind
Which has not faculties so much to hold.

If all the hosts could be again assembled,
Who formerly in that eventful land
Apulia, for their own blood did weep,
Or through the Romans, or in that long war, 10
Which gave so glorious a spoil of rings,¹
As Livy writes, who never goes astray;
With those who felt the suffering of wounds
What time they were resisting Robert Guiscard,²
And those whose bones are still collected seen
At Ceperano,³ where perfidious were

¹ The three bushels and a half of rings taken from the Roman knights who fell at Cannæ in the second Punic War.

² Robert Guiscard, the Norman Duke of Apulia, d. 1085.

³ Charles of Anjou, in his advance from Rome against Manfred in 1265, was treacherously allowed to pass the bridge at Ceperano, on the Neapolitan frontier. But the slaughter, and desertion of the Apulian barons in fact took place at Benevento.

The Apulians ; or by Tagliacozzo
 Where old Alardo ⁴ conquered without arms ;
 And each his hacked and mutilated limbs
 Displayed, it would be nought to emulate
 The shocking habitude of the ninth ward.

20

A cask, with its head's mid or side-plank gone,
 Gapes not so wide, as now a man I saw
 Cleft from the chin to the back's lowest part ;
 Hanging his entrails were between his legs,
 His vitals showed, and the disgusting pouch
 Which what is swallowed to excretions turns.
 Gazing on him while I was total fixed,
 He looked, and opened with his hand his breast,
 Exclaiming : " Now behold how I am rent ;
 How mutilated see is Mahomet !
 Before me in his torture Ali ⁵ goes,
 His face split from the forelock to the chin :
 And all the others whom thou seest here
 Spreaders abroad of scandal and of schism
 Were when in life, and therefore are thus split.
 There is behind a devil who divides
 With trenchant scimeter thus cruelly,
 Repeating it on each one of this band
 When we have made the tour of this sad road ;
 Because they that are wounded are healed up
 Or ere before him they again arrive.
 But who art thou, thus musing on the rock,
 Perhaps to stay thy coming into pains
 Adjudged upon the charge against thee made ? "
 " Nor death yet holds him, nor drag him his crimes,"

40

40

⁴ Alard de Valery, an old French knight, was with Charles of Anjou at the battle of Tagliacozzo, (won against Conradin, Manfred's nephew, in 1268,) and advised the stratagem of a pretended defeat.

⁵ Ali, Mahomet's cousin, and fourth Caliph after him, was engaged in a civil war of succession, and his followers remained as schismatics in the Mahometan community.

My Master answered, "to his punishment;
But to afford him full experience,
Belongs to me that am dead, him to lead
Through Hell descending on from round to round: "
And as I tell thee now, this is the truth."
More than a hundred were there, when they heard,
Who paused to look upon me in the foss,
Forgetful in their wonder of their pains.

"Bid Fra Dolcino" that he must provide—
Thou that art like in brief to see the sun—
Unless he wishes quick to follow me,
Such store of victuals that a stress of snow
May not give victory to the Novarese,
Which else 'twould not be easy to obtain."
With one foot lifted as in act to go,
Addressed me in this sentence Mahomet,
Then for departure put it to the ground.

Another who laid open had his throat,
And his nose cut off close below the eyes,
And who had only got a single ear,
Staying to look on us with wonderment
With all the rest, before them oped his gorge
Which on the outside was all crimson-stained,
And said: "O thou whom no offence condemns,
Whom erst above in Italy I have seen
Unless a great resemblance me deceives:
Remember Pietro da Medicina,⁷
If thou returnest the fair plain to see

⁶ Fra Dolcino, a religious reformer, and leader of a sect called the Apostolic Brethren, maintained himself and many followers for two years against the power of the pope in the mountain district of Novara. They were finally reduced by famine in time of snow, and Dolcino was horribly tortured and burnt to death at Vercelli in 1307.

⁷ Pietro of Medicina (a town between Bologna and Imola) had been a sower of dissensions between the houses of Polenta and Malatesta.

Which from Vercelli slopes to Marcabo ;⁸
 And to the two best men in Fano tell,
 To Guido namely and to Angiolello,
 That if our prescience here is not at fault,
 They will be thrown from their bark overboard
 And killed by drowning near Cattolica 80
 By a most felon tyrant's treachery.⁹
 Between the isle of Cyprus and Majorca,
 So foul a misdeed Neptune never saw,
 Or done by pirates or the Argolic race.
 This traitor who sees only with one eye,
 And holds the land, which this man now with me,
 Wishes that never he had held in sight,
 Invited them to conference with him :
 Then dealt him so, that 'gainst Focara's wind
 No longer need they make their vows or prayers." 90

Then I to him : " Resolve me and explain,
 If thou wouldst have me bear up news of thee,
 Who this man was, who saw the bitter sight."
 Whereon he laid his hand upon the cheek
 Of one with him, and opened him his mouth,
 Exclaiming : " This is he, but he is dumb.
 Himself an exile, he extinguished doubt
 In Cæsar, urging that a man prepared
 Will ever in postponement suffer loss."
 In what distraction now appeared to be 100
 With his tongue amputated in his throat,
 This Curio¹ who was once to speak so bold !

⁸ Lombardy slopes from Vercelli to the mouths of the Po, near one of which the castle of Marcabo formerly stood.

⁹ Malatestino of Rimini, who was a one-eyed man, invited Guido del Cassero, and Angiolello da Cagnona, of Fano, to a friendly meeting at Cattolica on the sea-coast between Fano and Rimini, and had them murdered by the boatmen as they were coming to him—Focara is a mountain near Cattolica, noted for a most dangerous wind.

¹ Lucan (*Phars.* i. 281) makes Curio, himself a fugitive from Rome,

One that had both his hands reduced to stumps
 Raising his truncate arms in the dark air,
 So that the blood bedabbled all his face,
 Cried out : " Remember thee of Mosca ' too,
 Who said, alas !—'A thing done has an end '—
 Which was the seed of mischief to the Tuscans : "
 " And to thy house destruction," I threw in.
 On which he, cumulating woe on woe, 110
 Went off like one in madness and in rage :
 But I remained to look upon the crowd
 And saw a thing which I should be afraid
 Alone to tell of without further proof,
 If it were not that conscience made me strong,
 That faithful comrade which supports a man
 Under the breast-plate of his own good thoughts.

I saw most certain and still seem to see
 A trunk that walked without a head, e'en as
 The others walked of that sad company : 120
 He carried by the hair the mangled head
 Held in his hand, in fashion of a lantern :
 And this regarded us and said : " Ah me ! "
 He for himself, himself a lamp did make ;
 And they were two in one, and one in two :
 He knows who rules it so, how this could be.
 When we were close upon the bridge's foot,
 He raised on high the hand which bore the head,

determine Caesar to cross the Rubicon not far from Rimini, using the words :

" Tolle moras—semper nocuit differre paratis"—

which are given in the text at v. 97.

² In 1215, one of the Buondelmonti being engaged to a lady of the Amidei, broke faith, and married one of the Donati. The relations of the slighted family met to consider their revenge, and Mosca Lamberti advised the death of the offender, who was set upon and killed. The affair became important because the divisions of Guefts and Guibelines came into Florence in the train of this private feud, and the words of Mosca were memorable in connection with it.

More closely to bring near to us its words,
 Which were: "View well this hideous punishment,"¹⁰
 Thou that in life goest looking on the dead:
 Reflect if any is as this so great.
 And that thou mayst of me take some report,
 Know me for Bertram Bornio,³ the man
 Who to the young king evil counsel gave.
 I made the son and father enemies:
 Not more Achitophel by Absalom did
 And David by his wicked instigations.
 Because I did divide two persons joined,
 Alas! I carry thus my brain divided
 From its commencement, which is in this trunk:
 Thus is the talion law in me observed."

³ Bertrand de Born, Lord of Hauteforte, and one of the best knights and troubadours of his time, educated Henry, eldest son of Henry 2nd, who was crowned in his father's life-time, upon his marriage with Margaret of France in 1173; and was always called "the young king" although he died before his father in 1183, and never sat upon the throne. In old charters, &c., Henry 1st is called *Rex Henricus vetus*—Henry 2nd is called, *Rex Henricus senior*,—and his eldest son is called *Rex Henricus junior*.

CANTO XXIX.

THE FOMENTERS OF CIVIL DISCORD CONTINUED—THE
ALCHEMISTS—THE LOATHSOME DISEASES

THE many people and the various wounds
Had rendered so inebriate mine eyes .
That they were ready to remain and weep ;
But Virgil said to me : “ Why dost thou gaze ?
Why thus transfixed do thy regards become
Down here among the sad and mangled shades ?
Thou didst not act thus in the other wards :
Reflect, if thou to number them dost think,
That two and twenty miles the valley winds ;
Already is the moon beneath our feet ;
The time is now short that is granted us,
And there is what thou hast not seen, to see.”

“ If thou hadst,” thus I answered him at once,
“ But understood the reason why I looked,
Haply thou wouldst have let me linger still.”
Meanwhile went on, and followed I behind,
My guide, as I was making this reply,
And adding to it : “ Withinside the cave
On which so firmly fixed I kept mine eyes,
A spirit of my race, I think, bewails

The crime which costs so dearly in this deep."
 Said then my guide : " Let not affected be
 Thy spirit any more on his account :
 Of others think thou ; let him there remain :
 For I observed him at the bridge's foot
 Pointing at thee, and with his finger threatening
 And heard him Geri Bello's ¹ name pronounce :
 So wholly wast thou at that time engaged
 With him who formerly did Hauteforte keep,
 Thou didst not look that way till he was gone." ⁴⁰
 " O my conductor, the untimely death,"
 I said, " which is not yet for him avenged
 By any that has part in the reproach,
 Rendered him angry, wherefore passed he on
 Without a word to me, as I suppose :
 And this has made me towards him kindlier."

Thus we discoursed as far as the first place
 Which from the bridge the next vale would have
 shown

To its lowest depths, if there had been more light.
 Above the inmost cloister when we came ⁴⁰
 Of Malebolgé, and its brotherhood
 Became apparent unto our regards,
 Through me pierced different lamentations
 Which with compassion had their arrows tipped ;
 Wherefore I covered with my hands mine ears.
 Woe, such as would be if the hospitals,
 Of Valdichiana ² 'twixt September and July,
 And if Maremma's and Sardinia's plagues
 Were in one pit together all to be ;

¹ Geri Bello, a noted sower of discords, of the Alighieri family, had been killed by one of the Sacchetti. The injury was not avenged at this time ; but 30 years after the murder, the nephews of Geri Bello retaliated it upon the Sacchetti.

² A marshy district between Arezzo and Cortona, noted for its malaria.

Such woe was here, and such a stench went up⁵⁰
As uses to proceed from gangrened limbs.

Descended we upon the final rampart
Of the long causeway, keeping the left hand ;
And now my vision more distinct became
Down to the bottom where the minister
Of the Most High, Justice infallible,
Punishes forgers whom it there enrolls.
Not a more miserable spectacle
Was in Ægina,³ a whole people sick,
When so malignant was the atmosphere,⁶⁰
That to the smallest worm the animals
All fell ; and the old nation afterwards,
As for a certainty the poets tell,
Was from the progeny of ants renewed ;
'Than might be in this darkling valley seen
'The spirits languishing in divers heaps.

Some on the belly, some upon the back
One of another lay, and others crawling
Shifted their places on the weary path.
Slowly and speaking nothing we went on,⁷⁰
Listening and looking upon the diseased,
Who could not lift their bodies from the ground.
Two I saw sitting, each by each propped up
As pan against pan to be heated leans,
Spotted from head to foot with scabrous sores :
And never saw I plied the currycomb
By a horseboy, for whom his master waits,
'Nor by one kept from sleep against his will,
As each of these incessant passed the teeth
Of his nails over himself, furious⁸⁰

³ The inhabitants of Ægina were destroyed by pestilence, and the island was repopled by ants changed into men by Jupiter. Ovid. *Metam.* vii. 523.

With itching which no other soothing knows :
 And in like manner tore the nails the scurf,
 As does a knife the scales of a sea-bream,
 Or other fish, which has them larger still.

"O thou that with thy fingers flay'st thyself,"
 To one of them my Master thus began,
 "And makest of them pincers for the nonce,
 Tell me if any Latins are with those
 That are within; so may thy nails suffice
 For this employment to eternity."

"Latins we are whom thou'st seest wasted thus,
 Both of us here," he answered with a groan :
 "But who art thou, that askest it of us?"
 My leader spoke : "I am one that descends
 With this one living, down from deep to deep ;
 It is my business Hell to him to show."
 Then they withdrew their mutual support
 And each one trembling turned himself to me,
 With all the rest, who by the echo heard.

My Master excellent kept close to me,
 Saying : "Speak thou to them whate'er thou wilt."
 And I began, so soon as he had turned :
 "As may your memory not pass away
 From mind of man in the antecedent world,
 And as it under many suns may live ;
 Say who ye are, and of what family :
 Let not your foul and grievous punishment
 Deter ye from disclosure of yourselves."

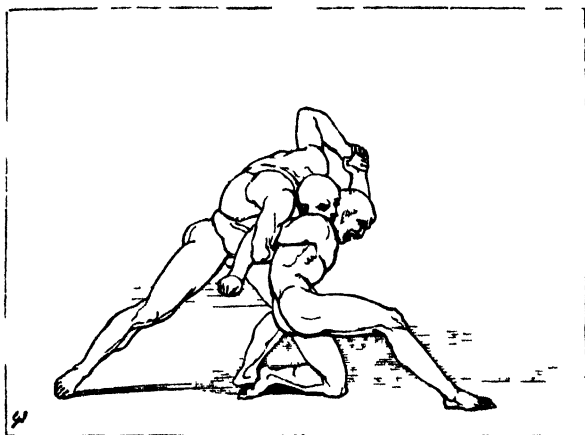
"I of Arezzo⁴ was ; Albero of Sienna,"
 One of them answered, "sentenced me to flames :
 But brought me not here, that for which I died

⁴ Griffolino, an alchemist of Arezzo, boasted to Albero, son of the bishop of Sienna, that he could teach the art of flying - failing which, his disappointed patron had him burned as a magician.

In truth I said to him, in jesting talk :
 'I know how I could rise in air and fly.'
 And he who was both curious and a fool,
 Wished I should show to him the art, and only
 Because I proved no Dædalus, he caused
 To burn me, him who had him for his son :
 But to the last division of the ten,
 Me, for the alchemy I used in life,
 Minos condemned, who cannot be deceived." 129
 Then to the Poet I : " Was ever known
 A race so frivolous as the Siennese ?
 Even the Frenchmen are far after them."
 On this the other leper, who had heard,
 Answered my question : " Always saving Stricca,
 Who knew the art of moderate expense,
 And Niccolo, who the luxurious use
 Of cloves was foremost in discovering,
 Within the garden, where such seed takes root ;
 And saving that club in which dissipated 130
 Caccia d' Ascian his vineyards and his woods,
 And Abbagliato his good sense displayed.
 But that thou mayst know who thus seconds thee
 Against the Siennese, give me thine eye
 So that my face may fully answer thee.
 Thou wilt see that I am Capocchio's⁶ shade,
 Who made false metals by my alchemy ;
 Thou must remember, if I know thee well,
 I was of nature a successful ape."

⁵ Stricca and the others, thus ironically mentioned, were young noblemen, some of whom belonged to a society, the members of which clubbed their fortunes together, and spent them in luxurious extravagances. The new use of cloves was as fuel in the roasting of pheasants and capons. The garden is Sienna.

⁶ Capocchio was a fellow-student in Natural Science with Dante.



CANTO XXX.

THE FALSE PERSONATORS, FALSE MONEYERS, AND FALSE IN
WORDS—MASTER ADAMO, AND SINON OF TROY

WHAT time that Juno was exasperated
By Semele against the Theban race,
As on occasions many she displayed ;
So wild a madman Athamas¹ became,
That when he saw his wife with her two sons
As leading one in either hand she passed,
He cried : " Extend the nets that I may take
The lioness with her cubs as they come forth ; "

¹ Athamas in his madness mistook Ino for a lioness, and her sons
Learchus and Melicerta for her cubs. Ovid, *Metam.* iv. 416, &c.

And then spread out his talons pitiless
 To seize on him that was Learchus called, 10
 Whirling him round, and dashed him on a rock :
 And she herself drowned, with her other burden :
 And what time Fortune to the ground reduced
 The Trojan's pride, which all things did attempt,
 So that together king and kingdom fell ;
 Hecuba, sad, in misery, and a captive,
 After Polyxena she had seen dead,
 And when her Polydorus on the shore
 Of the sea she discovered, in her grief
 Barked in a frenzied mood, as does a dog,² 11
 So great a sorrow had bewrayed her mind.

But neither Theban nor the Trojan madness
 Ever in any was so dreadful seen,
 Either attacking beasts or human limbs,
 As now I saw two wan and naked shades
 Who running bit at all things, in the way
 A boar does when he rushes from his sty.
 One at Capocchio ran, and in the nape
 Of his neck gored him, so that trailing him
 It made his body grate on the hard ground. 12

He of Arezzo, who in fear was left,
 Told me : " 'This goblin is Gianni Schicchi,
 And he runs frantic, treating others thus."
 I said : " O, as the other may not fix
 On thee its teeth, let it not too much seem
 To tell me who it is, ere hence it breaks."
 Then he to me : " This is the ancient shade
 Of the abandoned Myrrha,³ who became
 Her father's mistress in unholy love.

² Hecuba was turned into a dog. Ovid, *Metam.* xiii. 567.

³ Daughter of Cinyras, king of Cyprus. Ovid, *Metam.* iv. 340.

She to do sin with him, the same way took⁴⁰
 By personation of another's form,
 As he who yonder wanders undertook
 Falsely to personate Buoso Donati⁴
 Making his will and giving it due form,
 'To gain the mistress of the cavalcade.'

As soon as the two frantic souls had passed,
 On whom I had my vision rivetted,
 I turned it, on the rest ill-born to look.
 I saw one shaped in fashion of a lute,
 That is if only he had had his groin⁵⁰
 Cut off at where the form begins to fork.
 A heavy dropsy, which so mismatches
 The members with its ill-digested lymph,
 So that the face agrees not with the trunk,
 Compelled him to keep opened wide his lips,
 As does a hectic patient who in thirst
 One upwards draws, the other towards the chin.

"O ye that without any torment are,
 And why I know not, in the darksome world,"
 He said to us : "look on me and attend⁶⁰
 Unto the misery of Master Adamo :⁵
 I had in life enough of all I wished,
 And now, alas, I want a drop of water.
 The little brooks which from the verdant hills
 Of Casentino⁶ down to Arno flow,
 Making their watercourses cool and moist,
 Always before me stand, and not for nought,

⁴ Buoso Donati having died without making a will, Gianni Schicchi personated him in his bed, and dictated a will in favour of his nephew, Simon Donati, for which service he received a very valuable mare.

⁵ Adamo was a Brescian, and by desire of Guido, Alessandro, and Aghinolfo, brothers and Counts of Romena, he counterfeited in baser metal the florins of Florence, which bore the image of John the Baptist, and were of pure gold, and of the weight of 24 carats.

⁶ Romena is in Casentino, the valley of the Arno above Arezzo.

Because to think of them makes me more dry
Than the disease which macerates my face.
The rigid justice which excruciates me 70
Borrows its weapons from my place of sin,
The more to force my sighs to their escape.
There lies Romena, where I falsified
The alloy that is with the Baptist stamped,
For which on earth I left my body burned.
But if I here could see the tortured soul
Of Alessandro, Guido, or their brother,
For Branda's⁷ fount, I would not give the sight.
One is within this round, if the enraged
Spirits that circle round the truth relate : 80
What boots it me, that have my limbs restrained?
Yet had I only such activity
That in a century I could move an inch,
I should have started now upon the way
Seeking him in this miserable crew,
Eleven miles although it measures round,
And is not less than half of one across.
'Through them I am among this company :
'Twas they persuaded me to coin the florins,
Which had three carats of a base alloy." 90

Then I to him : " Who are the wretches twain⁸
Who smoke like a wet hand in winter-time,
Lying extended at thy right hand side? "
" I found them here, and since they have not stirred,"
He answered, " when I fell among these rocks,
Nor as I think will they for ever stir.
One is the false one, Joseph who accused,
The other is the Greek of Troy, false Sinon :
In their sharp fever they send forth this reek."

⁷ Branda is the principal fountain at Sienna.

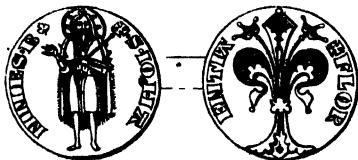
⁸ Potiphar's wife ; and Sinon the Greek, upon whose false pretences the Wooden Horse was admitted into Troy.

And one of them, who was to rage provoked, 100
Perchance at being named with such disgrace,
With his fist smote him on his rigid paunch ;
It gave a sound as it had been a drum :
And Master Adam struck him on the face
With his arm, which as hard appeared to be,
Saying to him : " Although I may have lost
The power of motion in my heavy limbs,
I have an arm at freedom for this work."
Then he replied to him : " When thou didst go
To the stake-fire thou hadst it not so free, 110
But so and more, when thou didst strike the coins."
The dropsied said : " In that thou sayest truth,
But thou didst not so true a story tell,
When to the truth thou wast at Troy besought."
" If I spoke false, thou hast made false the coin,"
Said Sinon, " and for one crime I am here,
But thou for more than any other art damned."
" Bethink thee, perjured villain, of the horse,"
Replied the other of the swollen trunk,
" And take for torment, that the whole world knows." 120
" Be thine the bitter thirst, with which may crack
Thy tongue," the Greek said, " and the loathsome water
Which with thy belly hedges up thine eyes."
Then said the moneyer : " Thus widely gapes
Thy mouth with evil speaking, in its wont ;
But if I thirst, and water puffs me out,
Thou hast a fever, and an aching head ;
And to lap up the mirror of Narcissus,
Thou would'st not in inviting lack much speech."

Entirely wrapt was I in listening, 130
When said to me my Master : " Now attend,
To quarrel with thee almost am I bent."
When I perceived that he spoke angrily,
I turned towards him with so much of shame,

That through my recollection yet it whirls :
And like a man who some vast trouble dreams,
Which in his dream, he wishes were a dream,
Willing the thing to be, as if 'twere not ;
In such case I, unable to pronounce
What I would say to excuse me, yet excused
Myself in full, nor knew what I was doing.

“ A greater error less of shame removes,”
My Master said, “ than this of thine has been :
Therefore discharge thyself of all remorse :
Remember, I am always at thy side ;
If it falls out, that fortune carries thee
Where there are people in the like embroil ;
To wish to hear it is a base desire.”



CANTO XXXI.

THE GIANTS.—NIMROD.—EPHIALTES.—ANTÆUS.—DESCENT TO
THE NINTH CIRCLE.

It was the same tongue wounded me at first,
So that it raised on either cheek a blush
And then supplied me with the remedy :
Thus have I heard the javelin was wont,
That was Achilles' and his sire's, to lend
• A cruel first and then a happy boon.

Away we turned us from the wretched valley,
Upon the bank which circles it around,
Passing along it, without any speech.
Here it was less than night, and less than day, "
So that my view but little reached in front :
But I could hear the sounds of a loud horn,
So loud it would have made all thunder faint,
Which, following its direction backwardly,
Drew my regards entirely to one spot.
After that lamentable rout, what time
Charlemagne lost his sacred enterprise,
Not Roland blew so terrible a blast.¹

¹ At Roncesvalles, when (in the romantic history of Charlemagne) the horn of Roland was heard eight miles off.

Short time I held my head to that side turned,
When many lofty towers I seemed to see; 20
Then I: "O Master say what is this town?"
And he to me: "Because that thou dost glance
Too great a distance through the obscurity,
It happens thou art wrong in thy surmise.
Well wilt thou see, when there thou art arrived,
How at a distance is the sense deceived:
Wherefore push forward something in advance."
Then by the hand he took me tenderly,
And said: "Before we onwards do proceed
That the reality may seem less strange, 30
That these are giants and not towers know,
And in the pit they stand around the bank
Sunk from the middle downwards all of them."

As when a cloudy vapour melts away,
By slow degrees the sight distinguishes
What piled in atmosphere the mist conceals:
Thus piercing through the thick and darkling air,
Closer and closer as we neared the bank,
Error retired from me, fear increased.
Like as on high round its circumference 40
Is crowned with towers Montereggion,*
So on the rampart which surrounds the pit,
Towered emergent upwards from the waist
The giants terrible, whom menaces
Jove yet from heaven, when his thunder rolls.

And now of one I could discern the face,
The breast and shoulders and the lower trunk,

* Montereggion is a castle near Sienna.—It was a popular belief that the walls of Babylon remained as all that was ever built of the Tower of Babel by Nimrod and his fellows (G. Villani, i. 2.). Possibly the arrangement of the Giants as the towers of a circular wall may have reference to this.

And both the arms that lay along the sides.
Nature indeed abandoning the art
Of animals created thus, did well
To abrogate such ministers of Mars ;
And if that she of elephants and whales
Repented not, whoever well reflects,
Will think of her as more discreet and just:
For where the power of intelligence
Is joined with evil instinct and with might,
Mankind against them can make no defence.

His face appeared to me as broad and long,
As is Saint Peter's pine-apple³ at Rome,
And all his bones in like proportion were :
So that the bank which served them for an apron
Down from the middle, only showed so much
Above, as that to reach unto the hair,
Three Frieslanders would hardly have been able :
For thirty full palms I could see of him
Below the place where men their mantles clasp.

"Raphel mai amech zabi almi,"
The haughty mouth began thus to exclaim,
To which a softer strain was suited not.
My leader turned to him : "O foolish soul !
Betake thee to thy horn, with that give vent,
When rage or any other passion moves thee :
Grope at thy neck, the baldric thou wilt feel
Which holds it slung, O thou confounded soul,
And thou wilt find it girt to thy vast breast."
To me he said then : "He himself accuses ;
This one is Nimrod, through whose wicked scheme
No more one language in the world is used.

³ The great bronze pine which now stands in the "Giardino della Pigna" at the Vatican. It is more than eleven feet high.

Leave him alone, nor as he wishes, speak ;
For every language is to him the same,
As his to others, which to none is known.”

90

Then we a somewhat longer journey made
On the left hand, and at a bowshot's distance,
We found another yet more fierce and huge.
To bind him, who the workman may have been
I cannot tell ; but pinioned he displayed
In front one arm, the other arm behind,
Within a chain, which held him shackled fast
Below his neck, and on the emergent part
To its fifth convolution girt him round.

91

“This proud one thought it meet to make essay
Of his own power against highest Jove,”
My leader said, “whence he has such deserts :
Called Ephialtes, his great effort was
What time the Giants made the Gods afraid :
The arms which then he moved, will move no more.”
And I to him : “If possible, I wish
That of Briareus immeasurable,
Mine eyes may some experience obtain.”
Replied he then : “Antæus⁴ thou wilt see
Near this ; he is at liberty, and speaks ;
He will convey us to the guiltiest pit.
He, whom thou wouldest see, is far removed,
And he is bound, and like to this one made,
Except that he looks fiercer in his mien.”

100

No earthquake ever was more terrible
That in its violence a tower rocks,

⁴ Antæus was a giant of Libya (denoted by the subsequent allusion to Carthage), and was vanquished by Hercules—Lucan, Phars. iv. 588. —He is unshackled, as not having joined the other Giants in their war against the Gods.

Than Ephialtes as himself he shook.
 Death never more than now had I in fear,
 And fear alone had its occasion been,
 If I had not bethought me of his gyves.

110

Proceeded we then further onwards yet,
 And to Antæus came, who full five ells
 Without the head, stood up above the brink.
 "O thou, who in the valley fortunate,
 That his fame's heritage to Scipio bore,
 When Hannibal with all his host gave way,
 Ere now hast made thy spoil a thousand lions;
 Who if thou hadst been in the mighty war
 Together with thy brethren, it would seem
 The sons of earth the victory must have gained,
 Place us below (nor for the task show scorn)
 Where icy coldness locks Cocytus up.
 To Tityus or Typhon drive us not:
 That which is longed for here, can this one give,
 Therefore incline thee, nor thy face avert.
 Still in the world he can revive thy fame;
 He is alive, and a long life may see,
 Unless grace summons him before his time."

11

Thus spoke the Master: and he with all speed
 His hand extended, and my leader took—
 The hand whose rude grasp Hercules had felt.
 Virgil when he perceived that he was grasped,
 Said to me: "Now contrive that I may hold thee:"
 And he arranged that we one burden made.
 As seems in looking upon Carisenda³
 Under the leaning side, when sails a cloud
 Above it, that contrary-wise it falls;
 Thus to me looked Antæus, as he stood,

120

³ The most oblique of the two leaning towers at Bologna.

Viewing him stoop, and he was such an one,
I could have wished to go another way :
But softly at the bottom, which consumes
Judas and Lucifer, he landed us :
Nor having thus bent, did he there remain,
But himself righted like a vessel's mast.

140



CANTO XXXII.

COCYTUS, OR THE LAKE OF ICE —CAINA.—ANTENORA

IF I had rough and savage rhymes at will,
As to the dreadful gulf would best befit,
On which are buttressed all the other rocks,
I might express the marrow of my thoughts
More fully : but since I possess them not,
Not without fear I trust myself to speak.
For this no matter is for playful treatment,
Describing the foundations of the world,
Nor for the tongue which calls—"Papa! Mama!"
But may those Ladies¹ to my verse give aid,
Who helped Amphion when he walled round Thebes,
That from the thing my words may not be far.

O people hapless above all created,
That hold this place which to describe is hard,
Better it were, ye had been sheep or goats!
Down in the gloomy pit, when we were deep,
Beneath the Giants' feet yet lower sunk,
And I was gazing on the lofty wall,
I heard said to me : "How thou goest take heed;
See that thou dost not trample under foot,
The heads of thine ill-fated brothers sad."

¹ The Muses.

On this I turned, and I perceived in front
 And 'neath my feet, a lake which freezing cold,
 The aspect had of glass, and not of water.
 Not o'er its stream so thick a mantle casts
 Austria's Danube in the winter time ;
 Nor Tanäis beneath that sky severe,
 As here it was : so that if Tambernich²
 Had fallen on it, or Pietrapana,
 'Twould not have cracked it even at the edge :
 And like a frog in attitude to croak
 With its mouth out of water, what time dreams
 The peasant girl of gleanings oftentimes,
 Livid, and plunged as deep as where shame shows,
 The tortured spirits were beneath the ice ;
 With the stork's music chattering with their teeth.
 Each of them downwards held the visage turned :
 From mouths the cold, and from eyes their deep grief
 Amongst them thus their evidences drew.

Around me for a space when I had looked,
 Down at my feet I saw two³ wedged so close,
 That they had mixed the tresses of their hair.
 " O tell me ye who thus your breasts press close,"
 I said, " who are ye ? " They then bent the neck,
 And when their sight they had towards me raised,
 Their eyes which were before that moist within,
 Flowed over on the lids, and the cold froze
 The tears between them, and so locked them fast :
 No rivet ever fastens beam to beam
 More strongly : and on this, they like two goats⁴
 Butted together, overcome by rage.

² Tambernich, a mountain in Slavonia—Pietrapana, a lofty summit of the Apennines in the Carrara district.

³ Alessandro and Napoleone, sons of Alberto, lord of Falterona, through which the Bisenzio flows to join the Arno. They fell by each others' hands.

And one then who of both his ears was reft
 By the cold, downwards holding still his face,
 Said : " Wherefore so much on us dost thou gaze ?
 If of these two thou wouldst some knowledge gain,
 The valley whence Bisenzio descends,
 Belonged to them, and to their sire Alberto.
 They issued from one womb : and Caina all
 Thou mayst search round, and never find a shade
 Deserving more to be in ice thus fixed ;
 Not he, whose trunk and shadow both were cleft
 At the same blow dealt by the hand of Arthur ;
 Not Focaccia ;^a nor he who cumpers me
 Thus with his head, so that I nothing see ;
 And who was Sassol Mascheroni^b called :
 Thou, if a Tuscan, knowest who he was.
 And that thou mayst not force me to more speech,
 Know that I am Camiccion de' Pazzi ;^c
 I wait for Carlin, who excuses me."
 Thousands of faces purple then I saw
 Made by the cold ; whence shivering seizes me,
 And ever will do for these frozen lakes.

While we towards the centre onwards went,
 In which all heavy substances would meet,
 And I was trembling in the eternal shade ;
 If it were will, or fate, or accident,
 I know not, but in passing through the heads,

^a In the romance of Lancelot, Mordred, the traitorous and rebellious son of Arthur, is slain by him, so that the sun's light was seen to shine through the wound.

^b Focaccia, of the white branch of the Cancellieri of Pistoia, was foremost in the treacherous murder of a kinsman of the other branch ; which led to the establishment of the destructive Black and White factions.

^c Sassol de' Toschi, a Florentine who murdered his nephew for his inheritance.

^d Camiccion de' Pazzi treacherously assassinated his kinsman, Ubertino—Carlin de' Pazzi was bribed to betray the castle of Piano di Trevigne (which should have been held for the Guibelines and Whites of Florence), in 1302.

I chanced to strike my foot against one's face."
Shrieking he cried out: "Why on me dost tread?
Unless thou comest to increase the vengeance ⁸⁴
For Monte Aperto, why dost trouble me?"
I then: "O Master, wait me here awhile,
That I of this one may a doubt resolve,
Quick as thou wilt thereafter will I be."

Halted my guide: and to that one I said,
Who yet was cursing at me bitterly:
"What art thou, that at others dost thus rail?"
"And what art thou, that goest through Antenora," ⁸⁴
Striking," he answered, "others on the cheek,
Too hardly even if thou wast alive?"
"Alive I am, and may to thee be dear,"
Was my reply, "if thou dost seek renown,
For I 'mongst others known thy name will place."
And he to me: "The opposite I wish:
Hence get thee gone, and give me no more pain,
Ill know'st thou how to flatter in this deep."
Then by his neck's nape I laid hold on him,
And I said: "Either thou thyself shall name,
Or not a hair shall here remain above;"
Then he to me: "Since thou dost pluck my hair, ¹⁰⁰
I will not tell thee who I am, nor show thee,
Although a thousand times thou maul my head."
Plucked hairs already in my hand I held,
And him of more than one lock had despoiled,
Howling the while he was, with eyes upturned:
When cried another: "Bocca, what dost ail?"

⁸ Bocca degli Abati, who traitorously cut off the hand of the cavalry standard-bearer of the Florentines at the battle of Monte-aperto in 1260; so that the standard fell, and the defeat of the Gueifs was completed.

⁹ This division of the ninth circle is named after Antenor of Troy, who was in treasonable correspondence with the Greeks.

Is't not enough to clatter with thy jaws,
 But thou must howl? what devil seizes thee? "
 "And now," I said, "to speak I wish thee not,
 Accurséd traitor; for to thy disgrace 110
 Of thee I can bear true intelligence."
 "Begone," said he, "and what thou wilt relate,
 But be not silent, if from hence thou goest,
 Of this one who so ready had his tongue;
 Here he laments the money of the French:
 Him of Duera,¹ thou mayst say, I saw
 In that place where the frozen sinners bide.
 If thou art asked, what others were with him,
 Him of Beccaria² at thy side thou hast,
 Whose neck was severed by the Florentines. 120
 I think that Gianni Soldanier³ lies
 Yonder with Ganellon,⁴ and Tebaldello⁵
 Who opened Faenza what time men slept."

From him already had we moved a space,
 When frozen in one hollow, I saw two,
 So that one head the other's cover was:
 And like a famished man devouring bread,
 The upper in the other fixed its teeth,
 In that part where the head adjoins the neck.
 Not otherwise than as when Tydeus gnawed 130
 The head of Menalippus⁶ in his rage,
 Did this one use the skull and all the rest.

¹ Buoso da Duera of Cremona, was bribed to allow Guy de Montfort, with the forces of Charles of Anjou, to pass into Parma, when he should have opposed him for Manfred.

² One of the family of Beccaria of Pavia, Abbot of Vallombrosa, and the Pope's legate, who was beheaded at Florence in 1258, on a charge of conspiring with the exiled Guibelines.

³ Gianni Soldanieri, a Florentine Guibeline, who in 1266, for his own ambition, betook to courting the populace, to the damage of his party.

⁴ Ganellon, the traitor at Roncesvalles, in the romantic history of Charlemagne.

⁵ Tebaldello de' Manfredi betrayed Faenza, by opening a gate, in 1282.

⁶ See Statius, *Thebais*, viii. 740.

“O thou, that showest by such brutal signs,
Hatred of him upon whom thou dost feed,
Tell wherefore,” said I, “stipulating thus—
That if thou hast cause to complain of him,
Knowing who ye are, and what his offence,
I will repay thee in the world above;
If that with which I speak, be withered not.”



CANTO XXXIII.

THE TRAITORS CONTINUED —UGOLINO —PTOLOMÆA —ALBERIGO
—BRANCA DORIA

UPRAISED his mouth from off his dreadful meal
This sinner, wiping it upon the hairs
Of the head, which he had laid waste behind.
Then he said: "Thou wouldst have me to renew
The desperate grief which presses down my soul,
Thinking upon it only, ere I speak:
But that these words of mine may be the seed
To yield this traitor infamy, whom I gnaw,
Together thou shalt see me weep and tell.

"I know not who thou art, nor by what means 10
Thou art below thus, but a Florentine

Truly thou seemest when I hear thee speak :
Know then that I Count Ugolino¹ was,
And this man the Archbishop Ruggieri :
Next will I tell why I his neighbour am.
How, by the working of his ill designs,
Confiding in him, I was seized upon,
And after died, there is no need to tell :
But that, of which thou canst not be informed,
Namely, how miserable was my death, 29
Thou shalt hear and shalt judge if he has wronged me.

“ A narrow loop-hole in the tower’s wall,
Which after me the name of Famine bears,
And in which others yet may be immured,
Had through its opening exhibited
First many moons, when an ill dream I had,
Which tore away for me the future’s veil.
This man appeared to me as chief and leader,
Chasing a wolf and wolf-cubs to that hill,²
For which the Pisans cannot Lucca see: 30
With gaunt and eager and well tutored hounds,
The Gualandi, Sismondi, and Lanfranchi,
He in the foremost of the chase had put.
In a short run appeared to me outworn
The father and his sons, and with sharp teeth
It seemed, I saw them torn upon the flanks.

¹ In July, 1288, Count Ugolino de' Gherardesci and his kinsman Nino de' Visconti, Judge of Gallura, were Guelfs, and contending with each other for power in Pisa. Against them both was the Archbishop Ruggieri degli Ubaldini, with the Lanfranchi, Gualandi, Sismondi, and other Guibeline houses. Ugolino treacherously united with the Archbishop against Nino and his supporters, and obtained the Lordship of Pisa. But he was in turn betrayed by the Archbishop, who incited the populace against him, with the charge that he had been a traitor to Pisa, and had given up their castles to the Florentines and Lucchese. Ugolino with two sons and two grandsons was imprisoned, and in the following March they were starved to death in the Tower of Famine at Pisa.

² Monte San Juliano, between Pisa and Lucca.

“ Before the break of day when I awoke,
I heard my children wailing in their sleep,
For they were with me, and demanding bread.
Stern must thou be, unless by this time moved, 40
Thinking on what now broke upon my mind ;
And if thou weep'st not, what could make thee weep ?
They now awakened, and the hour approached
At which the custom was to bring our food ;
And each of us was troubled by his dream,
When underneath I heard nailed up the door
Of the dread tower : and on this I looked
Upon my children's faces silently.
I wept not : I was turned to stone within :
They wept : and mine own Anselmuccio 50
Said : “ Father, what is this, why dost thus look ? ”
And still I wept not, nor an answer made
All that day, nor the night which followed it,
Until the next sun came upon the world.
As then there entered a thin ray of light
Into the fearful dungeon, and I read
In their four faces mine own countenance,
In agony I gnawed at both my hands :
And they who thought I did thus in the wish
To eat, upon the instant raised themselves 60
And said : ‘ It will be, father, less of grief
If thou wilt eat of us ; thou gavest us
This miserable flesh, and take it thou.’
Myself I quelled then, not to grieve them more ;
Silence we kept that day, and all the next :
Why didst not open then, thou cruel earth ?
At length when to the fourth day we had come,
Gaddo extended cast him at my feet,
Saying : ‘ My father, hast for me no help ? ’
And so he died ; and as thou seest me, 70
I saw the other three sink one by one,
Between the fifth and sixth day ; then betook,

Sightless, to groping blindly over them,
And called them two days after they were dead :
After this hunger was more strong than grief."

When he had said this, with distorted eyes
Again he tore the vile skull with his teeth,
Keen driven as a dog's into the bone.

Ah, Pisa, ignominy of the land
In the fair country where the *si* is sounded !
Since slow to punish thee thy neighbours are,
Let stand Gorgona³ and Capraia forth
To form a barrier across Arno's mouth,
And so to drown in thee all living souls.
For if Count Ugolino was accused
Of treachery towards thee in thy forts,
It was not well to punish thus his sons :
'Their youthful age in innocence secured
Uguccion and Brigata, thou new Thebes !
And the two others whom my verse has named.

Further we journeyed onwards, where the ice
Another people in its rough gripe holds,
Not hid their faces, but in full displayed.
Left them no way to weep their very tears,
And grief, which found no outlet at their eyes,
Returned within to increase their misery :
For their first tears in a concretion formed ;
And, as if crystal visors they had been,
Filled all the cavity beneath the brows.

And now, although, as in a callous part,
By reason of the cold, all sensitiveness
Had ceased to have abiding in my face,

³ Small islands near the mouth of the Arno.

Something yet seemed it that I felt a wind ;
 On which I said : " O Master, what stirs this ?
 Is not all vapour in these depths extinct ? " "
 Then he to me : " Thou soon wilt reach a place,
 Where in this matter will thine eyes reply,
 The cause beholding which impels the wind."

One of the sufferers in the frozen crust,
 Lifted his voice to us : " O cruel souls ! 110
 Such that the last place is to you assigned,
 Remove the solid veils from off mine eyes,
 That I may vent the grief which chokes my heart
 For a brief season, ere the tears refreeze."
 'Then I to him : " If thou wouldst have mine aid,
 Say who thou art, and if I free thee not,
 May I sink to the lowest depths of ice."

Then he replied : " I am Fra Alberigo ; '
 I am he of the evil garden's fruits,
 I here receive back for my fig a date." 120
 " How," said I to him, " art already dead ? "
 Then he : " In what manner my body stays
 In upper life, no knowledge I possess ;
 Such privilege this Ptolomæa⁴ has,
 That hither oftentimes the soul is cast,
 Ere ever Atropos the movement gives.
 And that thou may'st more willingly displace
 The glassy tears from off my countenance ;

⁴ Watery vapours in the air are assigned by Aristotle (*Meteorologica*, ii. 4,) as a cause of wind.

⁵ Alberigo de' Manfredi, of Faenza, in Romagna, one of the Joyous Friars (*In. xxiii. 103*), who revenged an injury from a kinsman, by pretending reconciliation, and inviting the offender together with his father to an entertainment. After supper he cried :—" Bring the fruit," which was the signal for his servants to rush in, and kill father and son.

⁶ This division of the 9th circle is so called from Ptolemy, the son of Ababus, by whom Simon and his sons were treacherously murdered at a banquet. 1 Maccab. xvi.

Know that so soon as any soul betrays,
As I have done, its body is possessed 130
Thence by a devil, who rules it afterwards
Until his time appointed is elapsed :
The soul is hurried downwards to this pool.
Thus may be seen the body, still in life,
Of him whose shade behind is wintering.
This thou wilt know, if thou regain the world :
That is Sir Branca Doria ; ' many years
Have passed away, since thus he was inclosed."
" I think," I said to him, " thou mockest me,
For Branca Doria is not yet dead, 140
But eats, and drinks, and sleeps, and clothing wears."
He said : " The Malebranché's foss above,
Where the tenacious pitch is bubbling,
Not Michel Zanché had as yet attained,
When this one left a devil in his stead
Within his body, and within his kinsman's,
Together with him who the treason worked.
But prithee now towards me bring thy hand :
Open mine eyes." But I unclosed them not,
For it was honour to be false with him. 150

O Genoese ! O men, that are set wide
From every virtue, full of all offence,
Wherefore from out the world are ye not swept ?
For with the guiltiest spirit of Romagna
One I found of you such, that for his deeds,
In soul he now is in Cocytus bathed,
And in his body seems alive on earth.

⁷ Branca Doria of Genoa. He murdered Michel Zanche of Logodoro, his father-in-law, for his estate, in which he was helped by a nephew.

CANTO XXXIV.

JUDÆICA, THE LAST DIVISION OF THE NINTH CIRCLE —LUCIFER.
—JUDAS ISCARIOT —BRUTUS AND CASSIUS —ASCENT TO THE
SURFACE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GLOBE, ON THE
EVENING OF EASTER SUNDAY

*"Vexilla Regis prodeunt Inferni,"*¹
Towards us : therefore be upon the watch,"
My Master said, "if him thou canst discern."
As when a thick mist through the air is breathed,
Or when our hemisphere is wrapt in night,
Turned by the wind, a mill is seen afar,
Such object near me now I seemed to see.
Then to avoid the blast, I went behind
My Master, for there was no other screen.
Now was I, and in fear I write my verse,
Where all the spirits wholly were inclosed,
And shone transparent like a mote in glass :
Some lay along, and others upright stood,
With head some uppermost, and some with heels ;
One, like a bow, bent to his face his feet.

10

¹ "The banners of the Infernal King approach"—the first line, altered, of a hymn of the Church of Rome used during the Holy Week.

Onwards such progress when as we had made,
That to my Master it seemed good to show
The creature that had once so fair a front,
Withdrew he from before me, stopping me :
Saying : " Behold now Dis ; behold the place
Where there is need with courage to be armed."

How frozen now, and feeble I became
Ask me not, Reader, for I will not tell ;
For all description would fall short of it.
I did not die, nor yet remained alive :
Think for thyself, if thou hast any mind,
What I became of both of them deprived.

The emperor of this kingdom dolorous,
From his mid breast stood forth above the ice ;
And I could easier with a giant match,
Than could the giants match them with his arms :
Now could I see how vast must be the whole
Conforming to the part on this wise made.
If once he were as fair, as hideous now,
And yet against his Maker raised his looks,
Well may he be the source of every strife.

How great a marvel now appeared to me !
Noting three visages upon his head.
One was in front, and this one ruddy showed :
Two were the others, that with this one joined,
Above the middle of each shoulder placed,
Extended to the region of the crown :
'Twixt pale and yellow the right face appeared ;
The one upon the left was such as those
Who come from where the Nile his valley has.
Underneath each there issued two great wings,
Such as befitted such a mighty bird :
No vessel's sails I ever saw so large.

Feathers they had none, but like to a bat
Their fashion was ; and to and fro they waved “
So that took rise from them three blasts of wind :
Hence all Cocytus was to ice congealed.
Wept he with six eyes, and adown three chins
Trickled the tears, with bloody slaver mixed.
In every mouth he mangled with his teeth
A sinner, as a hackle crushes flax,
And three in this wise he in anguish kept.
As nought the biting was to him in front,
Seen with the tearing, for some times his back
Remained entirely stripped of all its skin. “

“That soul above, who suffers the worst pain
Judas Iscariot² is,” my Master said,
“His head within, he moves his legs without.
Of the two others, with their heads below,
Brutus is he, that from the black face hangs ;
Note how he writhes, and utters not a word ;
Cassius the other, who so stalwart shows.
But now the night returns, and it is time
For our departure : we have seen the whole.”

On his command, I clasped him round the neck ; “
He watched the opportunity of time,
And when the wings were opened wide enough,
He threw himself upon the shaggy ribs,
Descending afterwards from fleece to fleece
Between the thick hide and the frozen crust.
When we had come to that part where the thigh
Begins below the swelling of the haunch,
My leader with exertion and with toil,
Brought round his head to where his feet had been,

² Judas Iscariot, and Brutus and Cassius, are placed here, as guilty of the greatest treasons in the Religious and Civil history of the world.

And grappled with the hide, as one that climbs,
So that I thought we back to Hell returned.

“Observe now well, for by so strange a stair,”
My guide said, panting like a man fatigued,
“From so great evil, we must needs depart.”
Issued he forth then through a hollow rock,
And placed me on the margin sitting wise,
And then towards me wound his cautious steps.
I raised mine eyes and thought that I should see
Lucifer in the posture I had left,
But I saw, that he upwards held his legs.
Perplexed that I on seeing this became
Let those dull people think, who do not note
What that point is, by which I just had passed.

“Raise thyself,” said my Master, “on thy feet;
The way is long, and dangerous the road,
And now to the half-tierce³ the sun returns.”
Not smooth was it, like roads to palaces,
Where now we were, but dungeon primitive
With floor uneven, and with scant of light.
“Before I tear myself from the abyss,
Master,” I said, soon as I stood upright,
“To rescue me from error something speak.
Where is the ice? and how comes this one placed
Thus upside down? and how in such brief space
From eve to morn the sun has made his course?”
Then he to me: “Thou thinkest still thou art

³ Half-tierce is midway between Prime and Tierce; that is, one hour and a half later than Prime; and Prime is twelve hours after sunset, and therefore at the Equinox coincides with the time of sunrise, or 6 A.M. The time indicated therefore is 7.30 A.M., reckoning now by the sun as seen in the southernly hemisphere, upon which Virgil and Dante, having passed through the centre of the earth, are about to emerge at the Antipodes of Jerusalem.

On that side of the centre, where I clutched
 That ill worm's skin, who perforates the globe :
 While I descended, on that side thou wast ;
 But when I turned, thou didst then pass the point ¹¹⁰
 Whither from all sides heavy bodies tend :
 And thou beneath the hemisphere hast come
 Opposed to that, which the expanse of land
 Contains, below whose highest point ⁴ was slain
 The Man whose birth and life were without sin :
 Thou hast thy feet upon the little sphere
 Forming the under surface of Judæica.
 Here it is morning, when 'tis evening there :
 And he, who made our ladder with his hide,
 Remains still planted, as at first he was. ¹²¹
 Down to this region he from heaven fell :
 The earth which formerly did here extend,
 In fear of him, a veil made of the sea,
 And came to our hemisphere : and perchance
 Flying from him, the space here vacant left
 That, which is seen on this side rising up." ⁵

Underneath Belzebub a place is, far
 Distant as ever the arched vault extends,
 To sight not sensible, but by the sound
 Of a small rivulet which that way falls ¹³⁰
 Through a rock's passage, which itself has worn
 With gentle slope along a winding course.
 My guide and I, upon this secret path
 Entered, returning to the lightsome world :
 And without wish for taking any rest

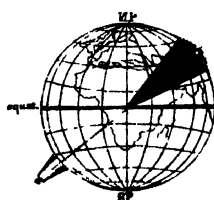
⁴ Jerusalem, the place of Christ's death : believed, in mediæval geography, to be the centre of the inhabited portion of the globe.

⁵ The Mountain of Purgatory is supposed to be formed of some portion of the substance of the earth which occupied the centre before the fall of Lucifer, and before the excavation of Hell, which was contemporaneous with it.

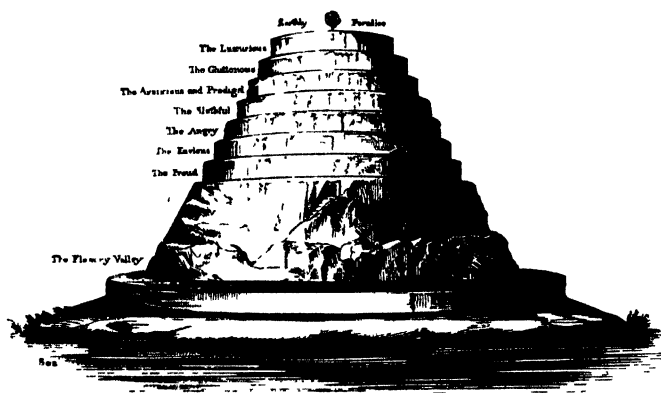
We mounted upwards, he first, second I,
Until I could discern the objects fair
Borne in the sky, through a round aperture :
Thence we came forth once more to see the stars.⁶

⁶ The whole time of action in the *Inferno* is divisible into three periods. 1. From the time of the discovery of Dante in the wood, to the time of his entering Hell on the evening of Good Friday. 2. From the time of his entering Hell, to the time of his leaving it at the centre of the earth, on the evening of the following day. 3. From the time of his leaving Hell, to the time of reaching the surface of the earth on the other side of the globe, on the morning of Easter Sunday.





PURGATORY.



PURGATORY.

CANTO I.

THE SHORE OF THE MOUNTAIN OF PURGATORY.—THE FOUR
STARS OF THE SOUTHERN SKY —CATO OF UTICA.—THE
GIRDLE OF RUSHES.

To traverse better waters hoists the sail,
This time the little pinnacle of my thoughts
Leaving behind it such a cruel sea :
And of the second kingdom will I sing
In which the human soul is purified,
And becomes worthy to ascend to heaven.
Here may dead poesy again revive,
O sacred Muses, for now am I thine ;
And thou Calliope, here something rise
Attending on my verses with those tones,

From which the miserable Pica¹ felt
Such stroke, that of forgiveness they despaired.

The oriental sapphire's lovely hue
That was diffused through the serenity
Of the pure ether, far as the first sphere,
Restored again enjoyment to mine eyes,
Soon as I issued from the deadly air
Which had cast sadness on both eyes and heart.
The beauteous planet,² that to love persuades,
Made smile the universal orient
Hiding the Fishes that were in her van.
I turned on my right hand and cast my looks
Upon the other pole, and saw four stars³
Unseen of any but the first mankind;
The heavens in their shining seemed to joy:
O widowed territory of the North,
That art bereft of looking upon these!

As from their contemplation I withdrew,
Turning a little towards the other pole,
To where the Wain was now gone out of sight;
Near me I marked an old man⁴ solitary

¹ The daughters of Pierus, who challenged the Muses to a trial of musical skill, and were changed into magpies (Pica) for their presumption.—Ovid. Met. v. 300.

² Venus, a morning star, is rising just before the Sun, which is in Aries, and outshines the stars of the sign Pisces which precedes Aries.

³ The four stars symbolise the four moral virtues—Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance (Purg. xxxi. 106): but were, perhaps, suggested to Dante by the four conspicuous stars of the Southern Cross, whose existence might have been known to him. Amerigo Vespucci, on his third voyage in 1501, first applied these lines to that magnificent constellation of the other hemisphere.—These stars would have been seen by Adam and Eve, while in the Terrestrial Paradise, which is placed on the summit of the Mountain of Purgatory.

⁴ Cato of Utica is placed in guardianship of the base of the Mountain of Purgatory, as a type of liberty, or Free Will—see also Æneid, viii. 670.—From the first outbreak of the Civil Wars, Cato refused to trim his locks, or shave his beard.—Lucan. Phars. ii. 375.

Who seemed deserving of such reverence,
That to his father owes not more a son.
Long was his beard, and varied with white hair,
Bore likeness to the tresses of his head,
Of which twinned portions fell upon his breast.
The beams of the four holy luminaries
So with their splendour lighted up his face,
That I could see it, as if the sun were there.

“Who are ye that against the dark stream’s course, “
Have broken from the eternal prisonhouse ? ”
He said, with movement of that reverend beard.
“ Who has conducted you ? or what your torch
As ye came forth of the profound of night
That ever makes the infernal valley black ?
Are broken thus the laws of the abyss ?
Or else of late are heaven’s counsels changed,
That to my caverns come ye that are damned ? ”
Thereon my leader did of me take hold
And both by words and gestures, and by signs, “
Made me do reverence with knees and looks.
Answer he made : “ Not of myself I come :
From heaven came down a Lady, on whose prayer
I have helped this man with my fellowship,
But since it is thy will to learn in full
Of our condition what it truly is,
Nothing there is which mine would keep from thee.

“ As yet this man his last night has not seen,
But for his vices was to it so near,
That to turn round there was full little time. “
As I have told, to him was I thus sent
To save him, and there was no other way
Excepting this, to which I have betaken.
I have shown to him all the guilty race,
And now those spirits would I to him show,

Who in thy guardianship are purified.
How I have led him, would be long to tell ;
Descends a virtue from on high to aid
My bringing him to see and hear thyself.
Please it thee then to welcome his approach :
He comes in search of freedom which is dear,
As they know, who for it have life renounced.
Thou know'st it : for its sake not bitter was
Thy death at Utica, where thou didst leave
The vest which at the great day will shine forth.
For us the eternal edicts are not strained :
Since this man lives, and Minos binds not me.
I am of that round where the chaste eyes dwell
Of Marcia^a thine, beseeching thee, yet seen,
O sacred breast, to take her for thine own :
For sake of her love therefore turn to us.
Through thy seven kingdoms suffer us to pass :
From thee to her I will report kind words,
If to be named thou deignest there below."

" Marcia was so well pleasing in mine eyes
Whilst on that side I was," he then replied,
" That from me she had every grace she willed :
But since that ill stream's further shore she keeps,
Nearer approach I may not, by that law
Enacted when from thence I made escape.
But if a heavenly Lady moves and rules thee,
As thou dost say, there needs no flattery :
Suffices it that ye by her invoke.
Go now, and see that this man girds himself
With a pure rush, and that his face be washed,
So that all foulness be from thence removed.
It fits not that an eye which is obscured

^a Cato's wife, who has been named as one of the spirits in " Limbo,"
In. iv. 128.

By any cloud, appear before the first⁶
Of them that minister in Paradise.
This little island round its lowest shores 100
Where yon the waves below are striking it,
Produces rushes' in its yielding ooze.
None other plant, not such as come to leaf
Nor indurate, can have existence there ;
Because they would not to the dashing bend.
Afterwards not by that way lies your path :
The sun will show it you, which rises now ;
Take ye the mountain by a gentler slope."

Vanished he then ; and I upright arose
Without a word, and I most closely drew 110
Towards my guide, and turned to him mine eyes.
Began he : " Follow in my steps, my son :
Let us turn backwards, for on that side slopes
The plain towards its lower boundary."

Full morning now was mastering the dawn
Which fled before it, so that in the far
I could descry the glitter of the sea.
Along we went upon the lone expanse,
Like men returning to a road they have lost,
Who, till they win it, seem to walk in vain. 120
When we had reached a place in which the dew
Fought with the sun, and lying in a part
Where there was shade, was little rarified ;
Upon the herbage both his opened hands
My Master very courteously spread ;
And I, that was advised of his intent,
Held out towards him my tear-covered cheeks,

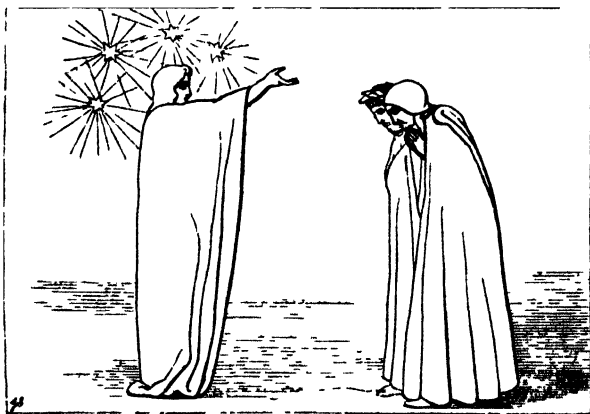
⁶ The first angel to be seen by Dante, and who is seen in the next canto.

⁷ The rushes are an obvious emblem of Humility and Resignation.

Then thoroughly he brought again to light,
The colour which by Hell had been concealed.

Upon that desert strand we now arrived,
Which ne'er before saw navigate its waves,
A man, who has experienced return.
Here did I gird me, as he had enjoined :
O wondrous marvel ! wheresoe'er he chose
The lowly plant, as oft it sprang again
Instantly in the spot where it was plucked.

130





CANTO II.

THE ANGEL MARINER.—THE SHIP OF SOULS —CASELLA

THE sun was now to that horizon come
 Whose circle of meridian hangs above
 Jerusalem in its most lofty point :
 And to him opposite the wheeling night,
 Was rising forth from Ganges with the Scales,
 Which from her hand fall, while she is increasing ; ¹

¹ The Sun is rising in Aries at the Antipodes of Jerusalem, and night is rising on the other hemisphere, from the east, in the opposite sign Libra (the Scales).—The night increases in length from the summer solstice, or longest day, to the winter solstice, or shortest day. At the autumnal equinox, which is midway between the solstices, the Sun is in Libra, and during these six months is never more than three signs distant from it, so that while the nights are lengthening, Libra is more above the horizon in the day than in the night, and during this time may be said to fall from the hand of night.

So that the pale and rosy-blushing cheeks
Of fair Aurora, where I that time was,
Saffron became in her more forward age.

Still were we on the border of the sea,
Like men whose thoughts are on a journey bent,
Who move in wish, but in the body stay.
And now behold ! as when the morn is near,
Through the dense vapours Mars shines ruddily,
Down in the west along the ocean floor,
Appeared so to me (as may it again)
Over the sea, a light so swiftly borne,
That flying with its motion could not vie ;
From which whilst but a moment I withdrew
Mine eye, to ask a question of my guide,
Looking again, it showed more bright and large.
Then on each side of it, appeared to me
I know not what of white, and underneath
Another by degrees loomed out from it.
My Master spoke not, all this time, a word,
Until the first white into wings resolved ;
Then as he recognised the mariner,
He cried : " Quick, quick, do reverence with thy knees ;
Behold God's Angel ; do thou fold thine hands ;
Henceforward thou wilt see such ministers.
Note how he scorns all human instruments,
Using not oars, nor any other sail
Than his own wings, between these distant shores.
See how he bears them raised to heavenward,
Winnowing the air with the eternal plumes
Which no change suffer, as does mortal hair."

As nearer then and nearer towards us came
The bird divine, more splendidly it shone ;
So that the eye could not endure it near :
I bowed my face : and he approached the shore

In such a light and swiftly moving bark
As scarcely left a trace upon the waves.
Upon the poop the heavenly pilot stood,
Beatitude was written in his looks ;
More than an hundred spirits sat within.
*In exitu Israël de Ægypto,*²
Chanted they all together with one voice,
And all the rest that follows of that psalm.
He made the sign then of the holy cross,
On which they all leaped forth upon the strand, ”
And he departed swift as he had come.
The multitude, who stayed there, foreigners
Seemed in the place, the while they gazed around
Like to a man who meets some novelty.

In all directions now shot daylight forth
The sun, that with his shining arrows had
Chased Capricorn³ from out the middle sky ;
When this new people making their address
To us, besought us : “ If ye are informed,
Show us the way the mountain to ascend.” “
And Virgil made them answer : “ Ye believe
Perchance that we are learned in this place ;
But we are strangers as ye are yourselves :
Before you but a little we arrived,
Along another way so rough and dread,
That hence ascent will be to us as sport.”

The spirits who were now of me aware,
Seeing me breathe, that I was yet alive,
In their astonishment became all pale :
And as to one that bears an olive branch ”
The people flock to hear intelligence,

² Part of the first verse of Ps. cxiv., “When Israel came out of Egypt.”

³ When Aries has risen above the horizon, Capricorn, which is ninety degrees distant from Aries, has left the meridian.

And none is seen that from the throng hangs back ;
In like sort fastened on my face his looks
Each one among these spirits fortunate,
Forgetting to speed onwards to be fair.

I saw one of them, who in front advanced
Me to embrace, with an affection such
As me to do the selfsame thing impelled.
Shadows illusory, except to sight !
Three times behind him did I clasp my hands, 101
And times as many brought them to my breast.
Methinks I showed my wonder in my looks,
For smiled the shadow, and withdrew himself,
And I went onwards, as I followed him.
Softly he spoke to me, that I should halt :
Then knew I who it was, and I besought
That he would stay awhile to speak with me.
“ E’en as I loved thee,” he for answer made,
“ While in the flesh, so love I now, released :
Therefore I stayed : but wherefore dost thou go ? ” 102

“ O my Casella,⁴ to return again
To where I am, this journey I perform,”
I said ; “ but why was this place thee denied ? ”
Then he to me : “ No wrong to me were done,
If this one, choosing whom and when he wills,
This passage often has to me refused ;
For of his own just pleasure thus he did.
But truly for three months he has received
Freely who ever would embark with him :
Whence I, at that time on the shore arrived, 103
Where Tiber’s waters first are dashed with salt,
Benignantly was taken in by him.
Now to that river’s mouth he steers his wings,

/ ⁴ A Florentine musician, and an intimate friend of Dante. Allusion
is made to this passage by Milton (Sonnet viii.).

For always it is there that he collects
All that to Acheron do not descend."⁵

Then I: "If no new law from thee has reft
The use and memory of the song of love,
To quiet all my fancies that was wont,
Prithee with it some consolation give
My spirit, that with load corporeal
Arriving here is so much overcome.

110

"*Love that converses with me in my thoughts,*"⁶
Began he then with so much tenderness
That yet within me does its sweetness sound.
My guide, and I, and all the multitude
That was with him, as passing well were pleased,
As if no other cares lay on our minds.
We all were rooted fast, and listening
To his notes, when behold that grand old man⁷
Exclaiming: "What is this, ye sluggard souls?
What negligence, what backwardness is here?
Haste to the mountain to strip off the slough,
Which suffers not God by you to be seen."

120

As when, to pick a field of corn or tares,
Pigeons assembled at their feeding time,
Quiet, and showing not their wonted pride,
If should appear a thing to frighten them
All on a sudden will desert their food,

⁵ The actual date of Casella's death has not been preserved, but it would seem that he had been dead for some time, and that Dante is surprised to find him only just arrived to enter upon the benefits of Purgatory. This is explained by the reply of Casella, who points out the general discretion of the angel, by which he has been delayed, and acknowledges that he has participated in the advantages of the Jubilee, which has been going on since the beginning of the year, and during which the angel was to convey all souls, not eternally condemned, at once to Purgatory, from his port of departure at the mouth of the Tiber.

⁶ The first line of one of Dante's canzoni in the Convito.

⁷ Cato.

Because by greater cares they are assailed ;
So noted I this novel company
Break from the song, and wheel towards the mount
Like one who runs and knows not where he goes,
For our departure was in no less haste.

111



CANTO III.

THE MOUNTAIN OF PURGATORY.—MANFRED.

ALTHOUGH this sudden putting to the rout
Had scattered them about upon the plain,
Back to the hill turned, whither reason urged ;
I to my sure companion joined myself,
For how without him could I have gone on ?
Who would have led me upwards to the mount ?
Remorseful seemed he for himself to be :
O noble conscience, and without a stain,
How the least failing gives thee bitter pangs !

Soon as his feet recovered from that haste,
Which strips its dignity from every act ;
My mind, which hitherto had been confined,
Enlarged the scope in which it took delight,
And I my face towards the mountain turned
To heaven that rises highest from the sea.
The sun in ruby light, which glowed behind,
In front was intercepted by my form,
Because in me his beams resistance found.
I looked around beside me, in the fear
That I was left alone, when I observed
Before me only that the ground was dark ;
And my consoler, “ Why dost thou still doubt ? ”

Wholly turned round to me, began to say :
 "Thinkest me not still with thee, and thy guide?
 Now it is evening where in burial lies
 The body within which I did cast shade :
 Naples now holds it, from Brundusium sent,¹
 Whence that in front of me no shadow lies,
 Thou shouldst not marvel, more than at the Spheres,
 That one does not another's light obstruct.
 To suffer torments, and both heat and cold
 Similar bodies Highest Power appoints,
 But how it does so, wills not to reveal."
 Foolish is he, who hopes that our reason
 Can ever penetrate the infinite way
 Which in Three Persons does one Substance hold.
 O human race, with reason be content :
 For if ye had been able to see all,
 No need had been for Mary to give birth :
 And you have seen desire, but with no fruit,
 Some, who if any, would have slaked the thirst
 For ever set before them for their pain ;
 I speak of Aristotle and of Plato
 And many others." Here he bowed his face
 And he no more said, and perplexed remained.

Meanwhile we came unto the mountain's foot :
 We found the rock here so precipitous,
 That feet in vain to mount it would assay.
 'Twixt Lerici and Turbia,² the most wild,
 The most sequestered pathway were a stair
 Open and easy when compared to this.
 "Who knows now on which side the mountain slopes,"
 My Master said, the while his steps he stayed,

¹ Virgil died at Brundisium, but was buried at Naples.

² Probably suggested by Thomas Aquinas—*Summa Theol.* iii. Suppl. 88.

³ Places at the extremities of the Genoese territory. The first near Spezia ; the latter near Monaco.

"So that one might ascend who has not wings."
And while his face he held towards the earth
Racking his thoughts of where the way should be,
And I was gazing upwards round the rock ;
Upon the left hand there appeared a troop
Of spirits who towards us moved their feet,
And yet seemed not, so slowly did they come. 60

"Lift up thine eyes," I to my Master said :
"Behold here those who will their counsel give,
If thou within thyself possessest none."
Then he looked on me, and with cheerful air
Replied : " Let us go thither ; they come slow :
And thou, beloved son, thy hope sustain."

This people was still from us as far off,
After a thousand paces toward them made,
As a good thrower with his hand might cast ;
When they all drew back to the solid rocks 70
Of the steep bank, and close arrayed stood still,
As one who goes in doubt to look might stand.
" O well accomplished, O souls now elect !"
Virgil began thus to them, " by that peace
Which waits as I believe for all of you,
Inform us in what part the mountain slopes,
Where to climb upwards it is possible :
For him who knows most, loss of time most grieves."

Like unto sheep that issue from the fold
By one, by two, by three, while stand the rest 80
Frightened, and turn to earth the eye and nose :
And what the first does, so do all the rest,
Crowding upon his back, if he should stop,
Artless and meek nor know the reason why ;
So I saw move to come to us the van,
At that time, of this blessed company,

Of Sicily's honour, and of Arragon's ;
 Tell her the truth, if different ought is told.
 After I had been in my body struck
 By mortal wounds twain, I gave up myself
 With tears to Him who pardons willingly. 120
 How terrible were mine iniquities !⁶
 But goodness infinite has so wide an arm,
 That it embraces him who turns to it.
 And if Cosenza's pastor, to the hunt
 Of me, who was by Clement then dispatched,
 Had duly read this portion of God's word,⁷
 My corse's bones to this day would remain
 Upon the bridge-end, near to Benevento,
 Under the keeping of the ponderous mound.
 Now washes them the rain, and stirs the wind, 130
 Out of the Kingdom on the Verde's shore,
 Whither he moved them with extinguished lights.⁸

" Nothing is by their maledictions lost,
 For love eternal will not turn away,
 So long as hope has any flowers of green.
 'Tis true, whoever dies in contumacy
 Of Holy Church, although at last repentant,
 Must stand excluded from this boundary,
 A period thirty times the space he stood
 In his presumption ; if this ordinance 140

⁶ Manfred was accused of having murdered his father, and his brother Conrad, and of attempting to poison his nephew Conradin.

⁷ Namely, that in which mercy is promised to repentant sinners.

⁸ Upon his desertion by the Apulian barons at the battle of Benevento, Manfred threw himself into the thick of the fight and was killed. At the end of three days his body was found, and, by order of Charles of Anjou, received the honours of military burial under a huge mound of stones. Afterwards his remains were dislodged by the Bishop of Cosenza, legate of Clement 4th, and removed out of the kingdom of Naples (for which he had been fighting), with the rites of excommunication. The river called Verde is the Garigliano, known by that name in Dante's time (Pa. viii. 68). It divides the kingdom of Naples from the Campagna, and was the boundary most easily accessible from Benevento.

By good men's orisons be not abridged.
Therefore see thou, if thou canst make me glad,
To my good Constance making thy report
How thou hast seen me, and of this exclusion ;
For here we profit much by them in life."



CANTO IV.

ENTRANCE INTO THE OUTER CIRCLES OF PURGATORY.
THE INDOLENT.—BELACQUA.

WHEN in enjoyment or in suffering
Which any of our senses occupies
The mind is wholly fixed upon that one,
It seems no other function it can heed ;
And this disproves that error which believes
That one mind with a second in us burns :¹

¹ The opinion that two minds co-exist in man, one rational and one sensitive, was formally condemned by the Eighth General Council held at Constantinople in 869. See also T. Aquinas, *Summa*, i. 76, 3. If there were two such minds, one might be taking note of time while the other was engaged with the external senses. But no one sense (for instance, that of hearing,) can estimate the lapse of time, because this requires the exercise of reason, and reason is only possessed by the mind itself. Therefore if the whole mind is engrossed by attention to the

And therefore when we see or hear a thing,
 Which to itself the mind attentive holds,
 Time passes by, and we are not aware ;
 For different is the faculty which hears, 10
 From that which is possessed by the whole mind ;
 The first is active, but enchained the last.
 Of this I had a true experience,
 Hearing that spirit and admiring him ;
 For fifty full degrees was risen up
 The sun, and I had not observed it, when
 We came to where those spirits all at once
 Called out to us : " What ye demand is here ! "

A larger opening oft times blocks up
 With but a single fork-load of his thorns 20
 The husbandman, what time the grape turns dark,
 Than was the pathway, by which upwards went
 My Master, and I close to him, alone,
 When from us did break off that company.
 Men reach San Leo, down to Noli go,
 Or mount the summit of Bismantua,²
 With feet alone ; but here a man must fly :
 I mean with active wings, and with the plumes
 Of earnest will, as I pursued that guide
 Who gave me confidence and showed me light. 30

Within the fissured rock we upwards went,
 On either side upon us pressed the wall,
 While underneath, its floor craved hands and feet.
 When we arrived above the higher edge
 Of the high scarp upon the open hill ;

¹ which is in active use, it is not at liberty to form a judgment of the passage of time.

² San Leo, in Romagna, situated upon a precipitous and isolated rock ; Noli, at the foot of rugged mountains on the sea border of the Genoese territory ; Bismantua, a lofty hill in Reggio, with a flat summit, only accessible by a narrow winding road.

I said: "My Master, which way shall we take?"
Then he to me: "Let not thy steps recede,
But mounting after me, gain on the hill,
Until some sage conductor shall appear."

So high the summit was, it baffled sight,
And at a greater angle sloped the flank
Than line from centre to mid-quadrant drawn.³
I was exhausted, and I thus began:
"O my sweet father, turn thee and behold
How I must rest alone, unless thou stayest."
"My son," he said, "push onwards far as there;"
Showing a terrace something higher up,
Which from that part winds all around the mount.

These words of his in such wise spurred me on,
That I made effort, crawling after him
Until the winding road lay at my feet.
Here for repose we both of us sat down,
Turned to the east, from whence we had ascended,
For looking on the past is wont to please.

Mine eyes I turned first to the lower slopes,
Lifted them to the sun then, marvelling
That we were smote by it on the left hand side.
Noted the Poet well, how I remained
Wholly astonished by the car of light,
Because between us and the north it went.
"If Castor," he to me then said, "and Pollux"

³ That is at an angle greater than forty-five degrees.

⁴ Virgil explains Dante's wonder by putting a still stronger case, namely, that if the Sun were in Gemini, which is nearer to the Bears—that is to the north—than Aries, in which he is, his place (expressed as the part of the Zodiac made ruddy by his light), would be even more to the north. And this is a consequence of the sun's being seen from the south of the equator (which is said to lie between winter and the sun—or summer—because the sun, in moving from winter to summer, crosses

Were the companions of that mirrored orb,
Upwards and down which sheds abroad its light,
Thou wouldst observe the ruddy zodiac
Revolving still more nearly to the Bears,
Unless from its accustomed path it strayed.
How this should be so, if thou wouldst conceive,
Reflect that Sion, reasoning with thyself,
Stands on the earth, together with this mount,
So that they both the same horizon have, 70
But different hemispheres: and hence the course
Which hapless Phæton knew not how to run,
Thou wilt see how to this must ever seem
On one, to that upon the other side;
If clearly does thine understanding heed."

"Never before, O Master mine," I said,
"Perceived I clearly, as I now perceive,
This thing in which mine intellect fell short;
That the mid circle of the highest motion,
Called the equator in a certain art, 80
Which always lies 'twixt winter and the sun,
For the cause thou assignest, lies from hence
In northerly direction, while the Hebrews
Towards the warmer region looked on it.
But, if it pleases thee, I fain would know
How long our way is: for the mountain soars
Higher aloft than can mine eyes attain."
Then he to me said: "Such this mountain is,
That aye beneath commencing it is hard,
Becoming easier as one higher climbs. 90
And when it shall become to thee so smooth,
That the ascending to thee will be light
As in a pinnace to float down the stream,

it), while at Jerusalem—the antipodes of the Mountain of Purgatory—the sun is seen from the north of the equator; which makes the difference.

Thou wilt have reached the ending of this path :
There to repose thy weariness expect :
Further I say not : this I know for truth."

And as he made an ending of his words,
Sounded a voice close by to us : "Perchance
Thou first wilt be obliged to seek repose."
On hearing it, we each of us turned round, 110
And saw upon the left hand a great rock,
Of which nor he, nor I had taken note.
Thither we bent our way : and men were there
Standing within the shadow of the crag,
As men are wont to stand in idleness :
And one of them, who looked as if fatigued,
Was sitting and was clasping his own knees,
Holding his face between them, down and low.

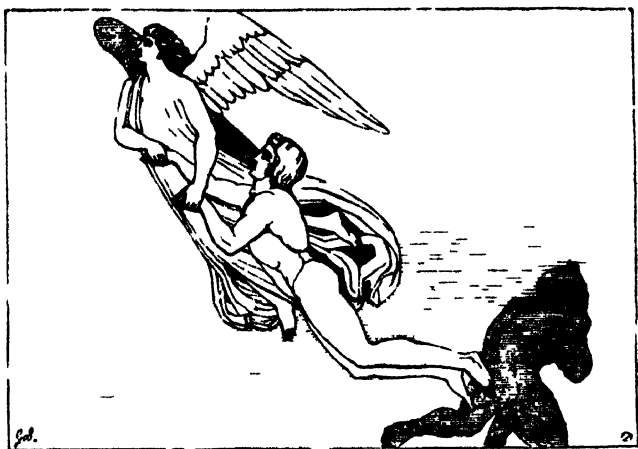
"O my sweet Master," I exclaimed, "behold
This man, who shows himself more indolent, 110
Than if Sloth had his very sister been."
Then he turned to us, and regarded us,
Raising his eye alone along his thigh,
And said : "Thou mayst ascend, for thou art bold."
Then knew I who it was : and the fatigue
Which yet a little made my breathing quick,
From going to him held me not ; and when
I came to him, he barely raised his head,
Saying : "Hast thou well noted how the sun
Urges his chariot on the left hand side?" 120
His sluggish movements, and his brief address
Something my lips persuaded to a smile ;
And I began : "Belacqua,³ grieves me not
Longer for thee ; but tell me wherefore laid

³ A Florentine, and friend of Dante, noted for his indolence. He was a maker of musical instruments.

Art here? dost thou for a conductor wait,
Or has thy wonted habit seized on thee?
Then he: "What boots it, brother, to ascend?
For through the trials will not let me pass
God's angel, who above the portal sits.
For first must heaven so long make me roam, 120
Outside of it, as in my life I was,
For I delayed my good vows to its end,
Unless before then to mine aid come prayers,
Ascending forth from hearts that live in grace:
What others stead? In heaven they are not heard."

But now the Poet on before me climbed,
And said: "Come onwards; note how has attained
The sun to the meridian; on the side
Night with her footsteps covers now Morocco." ⁶

⁶ Morocco stands for the extreme west, or part of the earth ninety degrees distant from Jerusalem westwards, as the Ganges has stood for the extreme east; and it is indicated that being 12 at noon at the Mountain of Purgatory, it is 6 P. M. at Morocco, at which hour night commences at the equinox.



CANTO V.

THE PENITENT IN VIOLENT DEATH.—BUONCONTE DA
MONTEFELTRO.—PIA

I was already from those shadows gone
And followed in the footsteps of my guide,
When behind pointing at me with his finger,
One cried: "Behold how not to shine is seen
The sunlight on the left of him below,
And he behaves like one that is alive."
Mine eyes I turned on hearing of these words,
And all in wonderment I saw him gaze
On me alone, and on the broken light.

"Wherefore so greatly is thy mind perplexed,"
My Master said, "as to delay thy steps?"

To thee what is it, if he mutter there?
Keep close to me : let them say what they will
Stand as a tower firm, that never stirs
Its summit at the blowing of the winds :
Ever the man in whom thought rises up
On thought, defers the purpose of his mind,
Because the force of one the other weakens."

What could I answer him, except, "I come" ?
I said it something with that colour flushed, 30
Which at such times commends a man to grace :
And then along the side, and meeting us,
Something in front of us a people came,
Singing the *Miserere* verse by verse.
When they perceived that I allowed no way
For passage of the sunlight through my form,
They changed their singing to a long deep Oh :
And two of them in form of messengers,
Ran out to meet us, and besought of me :
"Make us acquainted with what is your state." 35
Then said the Master to them : "Ye may go,
And carry back to those who ordered you,
That this man's body is of real flesh.
If to observe his shadow they delayed,
As I suppose, this is their full reply :
Him let them honour, for he may be dear."

• Ignited vapours I ne'er saw so quick
To cleave the sky serene in early night,
Or clouds in August at the setting sun,
As these returned upon their upward way ; 40
And joining with the others towards us came,
Rushing like troop-horses without a rein.
"This race which crowds to us is numerous,
And to beseech thee come," the Poet said :
"Therefore advance, and listen as thou goest."

“ O Soul, proceeding to thy happiness,
With the same members with which thou wast born,”
They came exclaiming, “ stay thy steps awhile.
Note well, if thou hast any of us seen,
That to the world thou mayst bear news of him : 50
Why dost advance ? O wherefore dost not stay ?
We all of us were slain by violence,
And we were sinners to our latest day :
Then heavenly mercy to us warning gave.
Such that in penitence and pardon, forth
We went from life, and reconciled to God,
Who filled our hearts with longing for his sight.”
Then I : “ Although I have your faces viewed,
Not one I recognise : but what ye wish, 60
O happy souls, of what I can perform,
Say ye : and I will do it by that peace,
Which, following the footsteps of this guide,
Has led me wandering from world to world.”
Began then one :¹ “ We all of us rely
On thy good purposes without an oath,
If inability check not thy will.
Whence I, that speak alone before the rest,
Demand of thee if e’er thou see’st the land
Which lies ’twixt that of Carlo and Romagna,
That thou wouldst courteous be and make request 70
In Fano, that there men may pray for me,
That I may purge away my heavy crimes :
I was of that place, but the gashes deep
Whence rushed the blood, in which I did exist,

¹ This is Iacopo del Cassero, a citizen of Fano, in Ancona, which is described as lying between Romagna, and the territory of Naples, of which Charles 2nd, son of Charles of Anjou, was king. He had been Chief Magistrate of Bologna, and was on his way from Fano to Milan, by Venice and Padua, to assume the same office there. Near Oriaco in the territory of Padua (denoted as having been founded by Antenor) he was assassinated by the emissaries of Azzo 3rd, of Este, whose enemy he had been at Bologna.

Were dealt me 'mongst the Antenoreans,
 The place in which I thought to be more safe :
 The d'Este did it ; for he hated me
 Beyond the point to be content with right.
 But if I had my flight towards Mira³ bent,
 When I was overta'en at Oriaco,
 I yet had been upon the breathing world.
 I fled to the morass ; the mire and reeds
 So held me that I fell, and there I saw
 Upon the ground a pool made from my veins."

Then spoke another : " As may that desire,
 Which to the high mount draws thee, be fulfilled,
 With holy piety encourage mine.
 I am Buonconte,⁴ once of Montefeltro,
 Nor Giovanna heeds me, nor the rest,
 Whence among these I go with face of shame."
 Then I to him : " What violence or chance
 So far from Campaldino wrested thee,
 That never yet thy burial place was known ? "

" Alas ! " he said, " by Casentino's plain
 There flows a river, Archiano⁴ called,
 Which over Ermo springs in the Apeunine.
 To where that appellation disappears
 I came : I was sore wounded in the throat,
 Flying on foot, and bloodying the plain.
 I lost my power of sight here, and my voice
 Died with the name of Mary ; on that spot

³ Mira is on the direct road from Oriaco to Padua, and if he had kept to that instead of turning aside into the marshes, he might have ridden away and escaped.

⁴ Buonconte, son of Guido da Montefeltro, and husband of Giovanna, fell at the battle of Campaldino (1289) fought near Bibbiena, in Casentino, the valley of the Arno above Arezzo ; and his body was never found.

⁴ The Archiano is a mountain-stream, which falls into the Arno near Bibbiena, and rises in the Apennines above Ermo (the Hermitage), which was the earliest convent of the order of the Camaldolites.

I fell, and all alone my body lay.
I will the truth tell : thou on earth repeat it.
God's angel seized on me, and he of Hell
Cried out : O thou of Heaven, why dost rob me ?
Thou claimest to bear off his part eternal,
For one small tear, which rescues him from me ;
But with the rest, I otherwise will deal.
Thou knowest well how in the air collects
The humid vapour which in rain returns 110
Soon as it drifts where it is met by cold.
He joined the bad will, which bad only seeks,
With reason, and he stirred the rack and wind,
By virtue of the skill his nature gave.
Wherefore the valley, when the day was spent,
From Pratomagno⁵ to the heights, he shut
In clouds, and over them disposed the sky
So that the laden air to water turned :
The rainstorm fell, and down the runnels came
Such of it as the soil could not drink up :
And as it happens with important streams, 120
Towards the chief river with such mighty speed
Headlong it ran, that nothing held it back.
My stiffened body at its opening
The chafing Archian found, and bore it on
To Arno, loosing on my breast the cross
Which I had made when spent in agony :
Against its banks it dashed me, and its bed ;
Then covered me and girt me with its spoil."

"What time thou art unto the world returned,
And art recruited from thy journey long ;" 130
A third soul to the second followed thus,
"Have me in thy remembrance : I am Pia :"

⁵ Now Prato Vecchio, at the foot of the Apennines, in Casentino.

⁶ A Siennese lady, and wife of Nello della Pietra, by whose orders

Sienna bore me ; the Maremma slew :
Of this he knows, who gave me once the ring
With his own jewel when he wedded me."

she was thrown from the window of his castle on the sea-coast, in order that he might marry another.



CANTO VI.

THE PENITENT IN VIOLENT DEATH CONTINUED.—THE EFFICACY
OF PRAYER.—SORDELLA

WHEN from a game at hazard men break up,
The loser stays behind disconsolate,
Repeats the throws, and sadly studies them ;
But with the other flocks the company :
In front some pluck him, and some from the rear,
While others claim acquaintance at his side :
He makes no stay ; replies to all of them ;
He crowds no more, to whom the hand is reached,
And from the throng he thus defends himself.¹
Such was I, in that thronging multitude,
Turning my face to them on every side,
And from them freed myself with promises.

10

Here was that Aretine² who at the hand
Enraged of Ghin di Tacco met his death ;

¹ The custom of the winner at the gaming-table giving money to the bystanders is mentioned in *Don Quixote*, Part ii. ch. 49.

² Benincasa of Arezzo, a jurist, who, acting as chief magistrate at Sienna, condemned to death for robbery a brother and a nephew of Ghino di Tacco, a person of good family, but himself a notorious brigand. Benincasa, fearing his revenge, got himself appointed the Pope's Auditor at Rome ; but Ghino followed him, and assassinated him on the judgment-seat in open court. (Ghino appears in the *Decameron*, x. 2.

And he that as he made pursuit was drowned.³
 Here too besought me with extended hands
 Federigo Novello,⁴ and of Pisa he⁵
 Who proved the fortitude of good Marzucco.
 I saw Count Orso,⁶ and that spirit reft
 By jealousy and envy from its flesh,
 As he asserted, and for no fault done ;
 I mean Pierre de la Brosse :⁷ and let take heed
 While yet she lives, the lady of Brabant,
 Lest for this thing with a worse troop she herd.

When disengaged I found myself from all
 These shades, who only prayed for others' prayers,
 That their becoming holy might be quick ;
 I spoke : "To me it seems that thou deniest,
 O my light, in a certain text expressed,
 That prayer can alter the decrees of heaven :"
 And yet for this, this people supplicate.
 In vain then will their expectation be,
 Or are by me thy words not understood ?"

He then to me : "What I have writ is plain,
 Nor will the hopes of these be falsified
 If well thou thinkest with sound intellect ;
 Because the height of justice does not stoop,

³ Cione de' Tarlati of Arezzo, who was carried by his horse into the Arno and drowned, while in pursuit of certain of the Bostoli family, with whom he was at enmity.

⁴ Son of the Count Guido da Battifolle, and killed by one of the Bostoli in 1291.

⁵ Farinata degli Scoringiani, son of Marzucco, who after his execution by order of Count Ugolino, obtained leave to bury the body by his patience and perseverance.

⁶ Son of Napoleone da Certaja, slain by his uncle Alberto da Mangona.

⁷ The favourite chamberlain of Philip the Bold of France. He was hanged in 1278, for some offence which was never made public, and, as was supposed, upon the instigation of the Queen, Mary of Brabant.

⁸ *Desine fata Deum flecti sperare precando.* Think not to change the gods' decrees by prayer. *Æneid*, vi. 376.

If in one moment fervent love supplies
What those abiding here should satisfy ;
And in the place where I that doctrine held, 10
Offences knew of no amends by prayer,
Because the prayer from God was separated.
But in a subtlety so deep as this,
Nothing conclude, unless she tell it thee,
Who will the light be 'twixt thy mind and truth :
I know not if thou markest : I mean Beatrice :
Her thou wilt meet above, upon the top
Beatified and smiling of this mount."
Then I : " Good leader, let us use more speed,
Already it fatigues not as before ; 20
And see, the mountain now a shadow casts."

" Together with the day we will proceed,
He answer made, "as far as we are able ;
But from thy thought the thing is different.
Ere thou the top reach, thou wilt see return
Him who is hidden now upon one side,
So that his rays thou dost not intercept.
But see, a spirit yonder who withdrawn
Alone and solitary, towards us looks :
He will instruct us in the shortest way." 30

To him we made approach : O Lombard soul,
How lofty and disdainful didst thou stand,
How grave and noble in thy moving eyes !
Silence he broke not with a single word,
• But let us come to him, and only looked,
As does a lion couching in repose.
Virgil drew nearer to him, and besought
That he would indicate the best ascent :
And he to his request no answer gave,
But of our native place, and of our life, 40
Made question ; and my well-loved guide began :

"Mantua"—when that soul before so rapt,
Towards him sprung from whence at first he stood,
Saying: "O Mantuan, I am Sordello,"
One of thy country;" and the two embraced.

Ah! Italy, enslaved, the inn of woe,
Ship without pilot in a mighty storm,
Mistress of no lands, but a very bordel!
This generous spirit was impatient thus
At the beloved name only of his land,
To pour caresses on his countryman;
And yet in thee remain not without war
Thy living men, and one the other tears
Of those whom circles the same moat and wall.

Enquire, wretched one, along the coasts
Of all thy seas, then in thy bosom look,
If any region of thee peace enjoys.
What boots it, that thy bridle did refit
Justinian,¹ if empty is the saddle?
Had he not been, thy shame would have been less.
Ah! people that should be obedient,
And suffer Cæsar to possess the seat,
If well thou knewest that which God commands!²
See how outrageous is the animal,
For lack of some correction from the spur,
Since thou hast laid thy hands upon the rein,
O German Albert,³ that abandonest
It furious and unruly now become,

² Sordello dei Visconti, of Mantua, was a gallant knight and poet in the Provençal language in the 13th century. He was a lover of Cunizza, sister of the tyrant Ezzolino, and is said to have been put to death by him.

¹ The Emperor, who reformed the Roman law.

² "Render unto Cæsar," &c.,—specially addressed to the clergy of Rome.

³ Albert of Austria, son of Rudolf of Hapsburg, became Emperor in 1298, but never entered Italy. He was murdered in 1308 by his nephew; and was succeeded by Henry of Luxembourg, from whom the Guibelines expected much.

That shouldst have vaulted to the saddle-bow.
May righteous judgment from the heavens fall 100
Upon thy race, may it be new and clear,
That thy successor thence may take alarm ;
Because thou and thy father have allowed,
Driven elsewhere by your cupidity,
The garden of the Empire to run waste.

Come, see the Capulets and Montagus,
Monaldis, Fillipeschis,⁴ heartless man,
These in distrust, and full of sorrow those.
Come, cruel man, and the oppression view
Of thine adherents, and their wrongs redress ; 110
How safe is Santafor⁵ thou wilt note :
Come and behold thy Rome in her distress,
Widowed, alone, that day and night exclaims :
Mine Emperor, why dost not succour me ?
Come, and how loving are thy people see,
And if affection for us fails to move,
For thine own glory let shame intercede.

And with all reverence, O highest Jove,
Who upon earth for us wast crucified,
Are thy just eyes to other quarters turned ? 120
Or is this preparation, in the abyss
Made of thy counsel, for some benefit,
Wholly beyond the reach of human sight ?
For all the lands of Italy are full
Of tyrants, and to a Marcellus turns
Each villain who in factions takes a part.

My Florence, well indeed mayst thou be pleased
With this digression : thee it touches not :

⁴ Guibeline families of Verona and of Orvieto.

⁵ Santafor, in the Maremma of Sienna, was a feud of the Empire, and is ironically indicated for its want of government.

Thanks to thy people, and the pains they take.
Many at heart have justice, but shoot slow, 130
For to the bow they take not unadvised ;
Thy people have it always in their mouths.
Many refuse the burdens of the state ;
But eagerly thy populace responds
Without a call, and cries : “ I undertake.”
Rejoice indeed, for thou hast good cause why ;
For thou art rich, and thou hast peace and wisdom :
Whether I speak the truth, the fact reveals.
Athens and Lacedæmon, that ordained
Their ancient laws, and were so civilised, 140
To living well made but a small advance,
Compared with thee, that weavest such thin web
Of policy, that unto mid November,
That lasts not, which was in October spun.
How often, within time of memory,
Laws, institutions, coins, and offices,
Hast thou changed, and renewed thy citizens ?
And if thou thinkest well, and seest the truth,
Thyself to a sick woman thou wilt liken,
Who cannot find repose upon her down, 150
But by her tossing seeks to ease her pain.

CANTO VII.

THE FLOWERY VALLEY.—THE ROYA SPIRITS.

WHEN salutations, courteous and glad,
Had been repeated three and four times over,
Sordello drew back, saying: "Who are ye?"

"Before what time were to this mount consigned
The spirits worthy to ascend to God,
My bones were buried by Octavius:
Virgil am I: and for no other crime
Have heaven lost, but that I wanted faith:"
Such answer to him did my leader give.

Like as a man, before him who a thing
Suddenly sees, at which he is surprised,
Believes, then doubts, and says: It is: it is not:
So he appeared; and then his eyes he dropped,
And with humility returned to him,
Embracing him where infants use to cling.
He said: "O glory of the Latins, whence
Our language what it can achieve has shown:
O lasting treasure of the place, whence I:
What merit or what favour shows me thee?
If I am worthy to receive thy words,
Say if from Hell thou come, and what abode?"

"Through all the circles of the realms of grief,"
 He answer made him, "am I come from thence :
 Virtue from heaven moved ; with him I go.
 Not for things done, but things undone I lost
 The vision of the high Sun, which thou seekest,
 And which but late by me was understood.
 Below, a place there is not sad with pains,
 But darkness only, and where the laments
 Are heard not as in shrieks but as in sighs.
 There bide I, with the little innocents
 Who by the teeth of death are snatched before
 They are delivered from the sin of man.
 There with those bide I, who the sacred three
 Virtues¹ have not put on, but without vice
 The others knew, and all of them observed.
 But if thou know'st, and wilt, intelligence
 Give us, that we the sooner may arrive
 At the beginning true of Purgatory."

He said : "No certain place is here assigned ;
 Upwards and round I am allowed to roam :
 Far as I may, I join thee as thy guide.
 But see, already how the day declines,
 It is not possible by night to mount :
 Of a good resting-place 'twere well to think.
 Souls are there something to the right removed ;
 So pleasing you, to them I will conduct,
 And not without delight will they be known."

"How may this be?" replied he, "if one wished
 To mount by night would he prevented be
 By others ? or by his own weakness fail ?"

Good Sordel drew his finger on the ground,
 Saying : "Behold, even across this line

¹ Faith, Hope, and Charity. The others are the four Moral Virtues.

After the sun was down, ye could not pass :
 Yet would there be no other obstacle
 'Than the nocturnal darkness to ascent ;
 For this confounds the will to impotence.
 In it ye might chance to return below,
 And go in wanderings around the hill,
 While the horizon keeps day prisoner. 60
 'Thereon my leader, as one marvelling,
 Said : " Lead us to the place which thou hast named,
 Where we may find in our repose delight."

A little were we from that spot advanced,
 When I perceived that hollowed was the mount,
 As valleys on the earth are hollowed out.
 "Thither," that shadow said, " we will proceed,
 Where in itself the hill a bosom forms,
 And there the coming day we will await."
 'Twixt steep and level was a slanting path, 70
 Which to that valley's flanks conducted us,
 Where more than in the mid the edge dies off.
 Fine gold and silver, vermeil, ceruse-white,
 The Indian vegetable bright and clear,²
 Fresh emerald, the instant it is broken,
 Before the herbs and flowers in that vale
 Growing, were all of them in hue out-vied,
 As by the greater is the less surpassed.
 Nor colours only nature there bestowed,
 But with the sweetness of a thousand odours 80
 A mingling undefinable produced.
Salve Regina,³ on the flowers and grass,
 There singing, I could see the spirits sit,
 That for the valley were not seen without.

" Ere what of sun is left retire to rest,"
 Began the Mantuan, who thus far had led :

² Indigo.³ The first words of a hymn to the Virgin.

" Desire not that among them I should guide ;
 The looks and actions better from this height
 Of the whole company ye will observe,
 Than if received among them in the vale. 29
 That one who highest sits, and has the look
 Of having what he should have done neglected,
 Who moves his lips not to the others' song,
 The Emperor Rudolf was, who power had
 To heal the wounds which have slain Italy,
 So that by others she is slow revived.
 That other, who to comfort him is seen,
 Governed the land, from which the water springs,
 Which Moldava to Elbe bears, Elbe to sea ;
 Called Ottocar,⁴ and he in swaddling clothes 30
 Was better than Wencesläus his son
 When bearded, on whom ease and pleasure fed ;
 And that small nose,⁵ which in close conference
 Appears with him of aspect so benign,
 Perished in flight, dishonouring the lily :
 Remark him, how upon his breast he beats.
 Look at that other, making for his cheek
 His hand a resting-place, the while he sighs.
 Father, and father-in-law of France's curse,
 They know how base and vicious is his life, 31
 And hence the sorrow which torments them thus.

" He who so strong-limbed shows,⁶ and who keeps tune
 In singing, with him of the noble nose,⁷

⁴ Ottocar, king of Bohemia, who fell in battle against the Emperor Rudolf in 1278. His son, Wencesläus 4th, was son-in-law of Rudolf, and died 1305.

⁵ Philip the Bold of France (remarkable for a small nose), father of Philip the Fair. He died in 1285, at Perpignan, on his retreat from Catalonia, after the disastrous issue of his war with Pedro 3rd, of Arragon. He is conversing with Henry of Navarre, father of Jeanne, wife to Philip the Fair, who is called the curse of France.

⁶ Pedro 3rd of Arragon, and called to the crown of Sicily after the Sicilian Vespers, died 1285.

⁷ The noble nose denotes Charles of Anjou, king of Naples.

With every virtue bore his girdle charged :
 And if, succeeding him, king had remained
 The youth,⁸ who now behind him has his seat,
 From urn to urn had virtue then been poured ;
 Which cannot of his other heirs be said.
 The kingdoms James and Frederick possess,
 But neither has the better heritage. 120
 Not often in their branches re-appears
 The excellence of men ; and thus ordains
 Its author, that of Him mankind should ask.
 My words apply to him that has the nose,⁹
 As to the other, Pedro, with him singing ;
 For which now mourn Apulia, and Provence :
 As much the plant degenerates from his seed,
 As more than Beatrice and Margaret,
 Constance a boast still in her husband has.

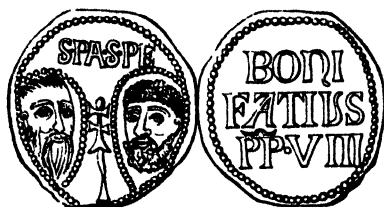
“ Behold the monarch of the simple life, 131
 Henry of England,¹ sitting there alone :
 He has a better issue in his shoots.
 Between these, he that lower down reclines,
 Gazing above, is Marquis Gulielmo,²
 For whom did Alessandria's enmity
 Make weep Montferrat and the Canavese.”

⁸ Alfonso, eldest son of Pedro 3rd, on whose death he succeeded to Arragon, and his brother James to Sicily. On the death of Alfonso in 1291, James took Arragon, and his brother Frederick succeeded him in Sicily.

⁹ Charles of Anjou, whose son Charles 2nd, of Naples, is felt by his subjects of Apulia and Provence to be as unworthy of him, as James and Frederick are of Pedro 3rd, (the three last being indicated by the names of their wives), and the memory of Pedro being better than the actuality of his sons.

¹ Henry 3rd, father of Edward 1st.

² William, Marquis of Montferrat (to which the Canavese belonged), was imprisoned by the inhabitants of Alessandria, and died 1292.



CANTO VIII.

THE GUARDIAN ANGELS.—THE SERPENT.—NINO.—CONRAD
MALASPINA.

It was the hour which moves to tenderness
In mariners, and melts into the heart,
The day they say Farewell to their dear friends ;
And which the new-left traveller to love
Stirs as he listens to the distant bell
Which seems to mourn the day about to die ;
When I began no further to employ
The sense of hearing, and I saw a soul
Upstanding, that begged audience with its hand.
It joined and upwards lifted both the palms,
Directing its regards towards the East,
As if to God it said : All is for thee.
*Te lucis ante,*¹ so devotedly
Gushed from its lips, and in so sweet a strain,
That from mine own thoughts it abstracted me.
Sweetly and piously the others then,
Followed it through the entire of that hymn,

¹ The beginning of the hymn, for protection from evil spirits during the night, which concludes the service of Complines or second Vespers, in the Church of Rome.

Keeping their looks towards the heavens raised.
Quickened thine eyes here, Reader, for the truth,
For now the veil is of so slight a web,
Truly it easy were to pass within.

I looked upon that noble armament,
That silently remained in upward gaze,
Humble and pale as in expectancy :
And I saw from on high come, and descend
Two angels with two fiery falchions,
Truncated, and rebated at their points.
Green as the newly-budded foliage,
'Their vestment was, which by their pinions green
Winnowed and beaten, they behind them waved.
Something above us, one took up his post,
The other lighted on the opposite side,
So that the people in the middle lay.
Well could I note in them the shining head,
But dazzled by their faces was the eye
As senses are confounded by excess.

"From Mary's bosom both of them proceed,"
Sordello said, "as guardians of the vale,
Against the serpent who comes presently."
Then I, who did not know by what approach,
Looked round, and very closely drew myself,
Frozen with terror to the trusted side.
Again Sordello : "Let us now descend
'Mongst these great spirits and converse with them :
Beholding you will be to them delight."

Three paces only, as I think, I took
And was below, when one I saw that gazed
On me, as if to know me he desired.
It was the time now when the air grew dark,
Yet not but that between his eyes and mine

That was made clear which it at first concealed.
 He towards me, and I towards him turned :
 O Nino,² noble Judge, how was I pleased
 When thee I saw, and not among the damned !
 Between us was no lack of greetings kind :
 He asked me then : " How long art thou arrived
 Beneath the mountain, over the far sea ? "

" O," said I, " passing through the sad abodes,
 This morn I came, and am in the first life,
 Although the other by this path is won." 60
 And when this answer was by them received,
 He and Sordello something drew them back,
 Like people that are suddenly amazed.
 To Virgil one, the other to one turned
 Who sat there, and exclaimed : " Up, Conrad, up !
 Come and see what God in his favour wills ;"
 Then turned to me : " By the especial grace,
 Which thou dost owe to him, who so conceals
 His own first purpose, it is fathomless ;
 When thou art yonder, over the long waves, 70
 Bid my Giovanna, that she pray for me,
 Where to the innocent is answer made.
 Her mother no more loves me, as I think,
 Since she her weepers white has laid aside,
 Which she, unhappy one, should wish again.
 By her it easily is understood
 How long in woman lasts the fire of love,
 Unless by constant looks and touches fed.
 None such a noble grave for her will make
 The viper which leads forth the Milanese, 80
 As would have made for her Gallura's cock."³

² Nino de' Visconti of Pisa, Judge or Governor of Gallura in Sardinia, and the rival of Ugolino in Pisa. In 1300, his widow, Beatrice of Este, (by whom he had a daughter Giovanna) married Galeazzo dei Visconti of Milan, a man much younger than herself.

³ The viper was the armorial cognizance of the Visconti, lords of Milan, as the cock was of Gallura.

He spoke thus with the signature impressed
Upon his visage of that upright zeal,
Which in the bosom in just measure burns.
Mine eager eyes now to the heavens turned,
To that part where most slowly move the stars,
As does a wheel the nearer to the axle.
And said my guide : " My son, on what dost look ? " 90
Then I to him : " Upon the triple lights,⁴
With which the pole is yonder in a blaze."
He then to me : " The four resplendent stars,
Thou saw'st this morn there, now are sunk beneath,
And these are risen up where those have been."
Sordello while he spoke towards him drew him,
Saying : " Behold there, our adversary,"
Pointing his finger to direct his looks.

Upon that side where had no lofty bounds
The little valley, there appeared a serpent,
Perchance who gave the bitter fruit to Eve : 100
Through grass and flowers came the evil snake,
His head from side to side turned, and his back
Licking, as does a beast that sleeks itself.
I did not see, and therefore cannot tell,
How into motion got the hawks of heaven ;
But moving one and other both I saw.
Feeling the air cleft by the pinions green,
The serpent fled, and back the Angels went
Up to their stations in symmetric flight.

The shade that to the Judge had closely drawn
When he called to him, throughout this attack 110
Not for a moment took his eyes from me.
" So may the torch conducting thee on high,

⁴ These symbolise the three sacred virtues—Faith, Hope, and Charity. No actual stars exist in the southern hemisphere which can be reasonably supposed to correspond with them.

Find in thy faculties so much of wax
As is enough to win the azure height,"
He thus began, "if true intelligence
Of Valdimagra, or the neighbouring land,
Knowing thou wilt tell; for there I was great.
Conrado Malaspina⁶ I was called;
Not I the elder, but from him I sprang :
For mine I bore the love, which here is purged." 130

"O," I replied to him, "within thy lands
I never was ; but is there any place
Throughout all Europe, where they are not known ?
The reputation which exalts thy house,
Proclaims its lords, and publishes its lands,
So that he knows it, who has not been there.
To thee I swear, as may I mount above,
That has not fallen off thine honoured race
In estimation for the purse and sword.
Training and nature so distinguish it, 130
That while the world its wrong head bears astray,
Alone it goes right, and the ill path scorns."

Then he : "The sun shall not again return
Times seven to the region which the Ram
With his four feet incloses and bestrides,
Before this courteous sentiment of thine
Shall in thine inmost memory be nailed,
With stronger rivets than are others' words,
Unless the course of providence be checked."

⁶ Conrad Malaspina of Valdimagra, Marquis of Lunigiana, and kinsman of Morcello Malaspina (nephew of the "vapour from Valdimagra" of the same name, *In.*, xxiv. 145), with whom Dante found a hospitable refuge in 1307. Conrad died 1294, and had ancestors of the same name in the 11th and 13th centuries. He is introduced in the *Decameron*, ii. 6.

CANTO IX.



THE EAGLE.—LUCIA.—GATE OF PURGATORY.

SHE that is concubine of old Tithonus¹
Showed white already on the eastern bank,
Come from the arms of her dear paramour :
Her forehead was with jewels brilliant,
Arranged in form of the cold animal,
Which with its tail inflicts on mankind wounds :
And the night, of the steps with which she mounts,
Had made two in the place where we abode,
And of the third were drooping now the wings ;
When I, that had with me the Adam's part,
Conquered by sleep, upon the grass reclined,
Where we all five² already were sat down.

What time begins her melancholy lay
The swallow close upon the break of morn,
Haply in memory of her first grief ;³

¹ Aurora, or Sun-dawn, being the wife of Tithonus, Moon-dawn is called his concubine ; and it is indicated that the moon is about to rise preceded by Scorpio. The steps of the night are hours, so that as the night began at 6 P. M. it is now nearly 9 P. M., at which time Dante falls asleep, but does not dream until the morning, which is next indicated.

² Dante, Virgil, Sordello, Nino, and Conrad.

³ When Progne was changed into a swallow.—Ovid. Met., vi. 433.

And when the mind of man, a wanderer
Most from the flesh, and least by cares oppressed,
Is in its vision as it were divine ;
In sleep it seemed to me that I saw hang
An eagle with gold plumage in the sky,
With open wings, and for a swoop prepared :
And in that place he seemed to be, where was
By Ganymede abandoned his own kin,
When to the highest conclave he was snatched.
Within myself I thought, perchance he strikes
By wont here only, and from other spots
Disdains to bear off upwards in his claws.
He seemed then, after wheeling for a while,
Terrible as the lightning to descend,
And me to bear up to the fiery sphere ;
There seemed it that both he and I were burned :
And so did scorch me this imagined fire,
That by it was my slumber broken up.
Not otherwise himself Achilles roused,
Rolling around him his new-wakened eyes,
And ignorant of what place he was in,
What time his mother from Chiron to Scyros
Transported him, while in her arms he slept,
Whence afterwards the Greeks made him depart.
Thus I awoke, and from my countenance
Chased sleep away, and I became all pale,
As does a man with terror that is frozen.
My only comforter was at my side,
More than two hours risen was the sun,
And towards the sea-shore was my face disposed.

“ Be not afraid,” my Master said to me,
“ Be sure we have to a good pass arrived :
Relax not, but redouble all thy strength,
For now thou art to Purgatory come :
Behold the height within which it is girt ;

Behold the entrance where it shows a breach.
Erewhile, at dawn which ushers in the day,
What time within thee was thy soul asleep,
Over the flowers which the valley deck,
A lady came, and 'I am Lucia,' said,
'Permit me to take up this slumberer :
So will I onwards speed him on his way.'
Sordel stayed, and the other noble forms :
She lifted ther, and when the day was bright,
Went upwards, and I followed in her steps.
She placed thee here ; and first disclosed to me
Her beauteous eyes this open entrance gate ;
Then she and sleep at the same moment fled."

Like to a man, who doubting gathers heart,
And who to consolation turns his fear,
Soon as to him discovered is the truth,
I suffered change ; and when from care released
My leader saw me, up along the hill
He moved, and I behind him, towards the height.

Reader, thou mayst note how I elevate
My subject, and thereafter with more art
If I sustain it, be not thou surprised.

Approached we now, and to a place were come,
When at the part where first a breach was seen,
Like to an opening which breaks a wall,
I saw a portal, and beneath three steps
Conducting up to it, of different hues.
A porter likewise who yet spoke no word :
And as the view extended more and more,
I saw that on the upper step he sat,
Of visage such I could not look on it ;
And in his hand he held a naked sword
Which so reflected towards us its rays,

That oft in vain my looks I fixed on him.
 "Tell me from thence, what is it that ye will?"
 He thus began to speak, "where is your guide?
 Beware that the ascending harm you not."

"A heavenly Lady in these things instructed,"
 Answered my Master to him, "while ago
 Said to us; Thither go; there is the gate."
 "May she to a good end your way assist,"
 The courteous janitor again began:
 "Therefore approach and to our steps advance."

Thither advanced we; and the first ascent
 Was of white marble, bright, and polished so
 That in it I myself saw as I was.
 The second was in colour more than dark,
 Formed of a rugged and half-calcined rock,
 Which in its length and breadth was full of cracks.
 The third one, which was highest superposed,
 Seemed to me of a flaming porphyry,
 Like to the blood which issues from a vein.
 Supported upon this had both his feet
 God's Angel, who upon the threshold sat,
 Which seemed to be a rock of adamant.
 With good will upwards by the triple steps
 Led my conductor, saying: "Make request
 In humble fashion that the lock may yield."

Devout I threw me at the holy feet:
 I prayed in mercy he for me would open,
 But first I struck three times upon my breast.
 Upon my forehead seven P's⁴ he traced
 With his sword's point, and: "See that thou wash off,"

⁴ For the seven capital sins (Peccata), which are purified in the seven circles of Purgatory.

He said, "these marks when thou arrive within."
Ashes, or earth when it is dug up dry,
Of the same colour with his raiment are ;
And from beneath it he drew forth two keys ;
Of silver one, the other was of gold.
First with the white and with the yellow next
To my content he did unto the door.

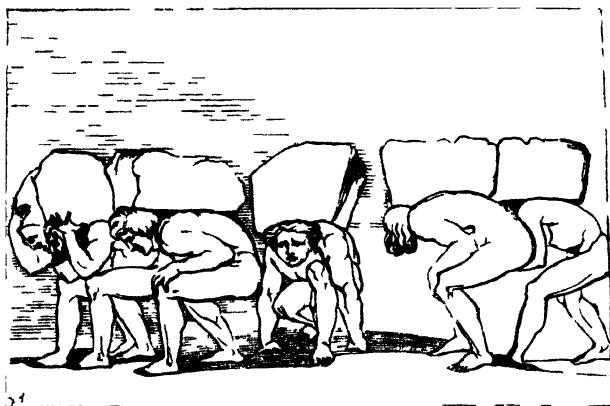
"Whenever one of these two keys doth fail,
By not revolving rightly through the lock,"
He said to us, "this portal will not open.
One is more precious, more the other needs
Of art and knowledge ere it will unlock,
For it is this one which resolves the knot.⁵
From Peter hold them I ; he bids me err
Rather in opening than in keeping shut,
If only at my feet the people fall."

He pushed the door then towards the sacred side,¹³⁰
Saying : "Now enter : but be well advised
That whoso looks back must outside return."
And when upon the hinges were swung round
The pivots of that sacred entrance gate,
That were of ponderous metal resonant ;
Sounded not so, nor gave so loud a note,
Tarpeia, what time was removed the good
Metellus,⁶ after which it was despoiled.
I turned attentive to its earliest tones,
And *Te Deum laudamus*, as it seemed,
I heard in voices mixed with the sweet sound.

⁵ The golden key is typical of the power to open, and the silver key of the knowledge to whom to open.—T. Aquinas, Summa, 3, Suppl. xvii. 3.

⁶ The tribune Metellus, who resisted Julius Cæsar, when, in order to obtain the sacred treasure of Rome, he opened the doors of the temple of Saturn on the Tarpeian rock. The passage is suggested by Lucan Phars., iii. 154.

Exactly such impression gave to me,
That which I heard, as one is wont to have
When there is chanting with the organ blended,
When now the words are heard, and now are not.



CANTO V.

THE FIRST CIRCLE—THE PROUD UNDER HEAVY BURDENS—
 SCULPTURED EXAMPLES OF HUMILITY—THE VIRGIN MARY
 —DAVID—TRAJAN—THE HEAVY WEIGHTS

Soon as we passed the threshold of the gate,
 That is disused by the ill choice of souls,
 Causing the crooked way to appear as straight,
 I knew by its resounding, that it closed :
 And if mine eyes towards it I had turned,
 What could have been for such fault good excuse ?
 Upwards we mounted through a fissured rock,
 Which went alternately from side to side,
 Approaching and retreating like a wave.
 " Here some contrivance we must needs employ,"
 Commenced my leader thus, " and closely keep

On either hand to the receding side : ”
 And this enforced our paces to be slow,
 So that had first the moon’s decreasing orb
 Regained her couch to lay her down to rest ¹
 Before we came forth of that needle’s eye.
 But when we were enlarged from it, and free
 In that part where the mountain backward trends,
 I much fatigued and both of us in doubt
 Of our way, we stood upon a level 20
 More lonely than the tracks across a waste.

From the one side, on which the void abuts,
 To foot of the high bank which upward springs,
 The body of a man would three times reach :
 And far as could mine eye its flight extend,
 Along the right hand and the left hand side,
 The upper edge appeared to be as high.
 Upon it had not yet our footsteps moved,
 When I distinguished that this circling bank,
 Which rose so straight it had not any slope, 30
 Was of white marble, and was decorated
 With sculptures such that Polycletus’ ² self,
 Or even nature, from them might take shame.

The Angel ³ that on earth came with the law
 Of that peace, which was wept for many years,
 Which opened heaven from its long denial,
 Before us in such truthfulness appeared,
 That sculptured there in gracious attitude
 It seemed not like a silent imaging.
 One would have sworn that he was saying, *Hail!* 40
 For also she was represented there,
 Who turned the keys to open Highest Love,

¹ This indicates about 11. 20 A. M. the moon having risen at 9 P. M. on the previous night.

² The famous Grecian sculptor.

³ The angel Gabriel at the Annunciation. Luke i. 26—38.

And in her bearing had impressed the words,
Behold the handmaid of the Lord, as true
As a mould stamps itself upon the wax.

“ Give not attention to one place alone ; ”
Said to me my dear Master, having me
Upon that side where lies the heart of man :
Wherefore I moved on, looking, and I saw
Following Mary, and upon that side 50
Where stood he, who had caused me to advance,
Another story graven in the rock.
On which, I passed by Virgil and drew near
That it might be submitted to mine eyes.
There was incised upon the very marble
The cart and oxen drawing the blest Ark ;
Whence men should fear unbidden services.⁴
Before were seen the people and they all
Parted in seven choirs, to senses twain
Made say, one “ Yes,” the other, “ No ; ” “ They sing.” ⁶⁰
So with the smoking of the frankincense
There represented, and the eye and nose,
With yes and no were still at variance.
There went before the consecrated chest
The humble Psalmist, leaping as he danced,
And at that time was less and more than king.
Over against, and at the window shown
Of a great palace, Michal looked on him
Like to a woman troubled and in scorn.

I from the place I stood in moved my feet, 70
Another legend closer to peruse,
Which after Michal glittered in the white.
There was instoried the exalted glory

⁴ In allusion to the judgment upon Uzzah, who put forth his hand to the ark of God.—For the whole see 2 Samuel, vi.

Of that one of Rome's princes whose great worth
 Moved Gregory^a to his great victory :
 I speak of Trajan that was emperor :
 And at his bridle rein a widow stood
 Presented in the guise of tears and grief.
 Surrounding him the press and throng was seen
 Of nobles, and the eagles in the gold^b
 Were seen above him moving in the wind.
 The woman sorrowful, before them all
 Appeared to say : " My lord, give me revenge
 For my dead son, for whom I am heart-broken."
 And he to answer her : " Thou must await
 Till I return again ; " and she : " My lord,"
 Like one in whom grief no delay could brook,
 " If thou dost—not ? " and he : " Who takes my place
 Will give it thee : " and she : " Another's good deeds
 How will they boot thee, mindless of thine own ? " ^c
 Then he : " Be comforted ; for it is need
 That I perform my duty ere I go ;
 Justice so wills, and pity holds me back."
 He,^d who has never any new thing seen,
 Fashioned this conversation visible,
 Novel to us because not found on earth.

While I was taking my delight to view
 These images of such humility,
 And for their Maker precious to the sight ;
 " Yonder behold, but progress slow they make," ^e

^a According to the old legend the soul of Trajan was saved from the pains of hell upon the prayer of St. Gregory, who was moved to make intercession for him by the remembrance of his good deeds and virtues. The story of the widow is originally told by Dio Cassius of Hadrian, but was current in the middle ages of Trajan. Trajan is placed by Dante in Paradise together with David, Par. xx. 43.

^b The eagles are mentioned, as if, according to the notion of the time, they had been displayed on banners. G. Villani says (i. 40), that from Augustus to Constantine, the Roman eagle was borne black on a gold field.

^c God, to whom nothing can be new.

The poet murmuring said, "much company;
These will conduct us to the lofty steps."⁸
Mine eyes that were for looking all prepared,
As being eager novel things to see,
Were not remiss in turning round to him.
I would not, Reader, have thee be deterred
From thy good purposes, when thou shalt hear
How God determines that dues shall be paid.
Think not upon the form of punishment;
Think on what follows it, think that at worst
It cannot after the great sentence last.

I began: "Master, that which I perceive
Moving towards us, seems not to be men,
But what I know not, in uncertain sight."
Then he to me: "The heavy quality
Of their tormenting, stoops them to the earth,
So that at first mine eyesight was in doubt.
But closely look on them, and disengage
With thy sight that which comes beneath the stones:
Thou mayst distinguish how each one is pained."¹⁰

O ye proud Christians, wretched and infirm,
Who in the feeble vision of your minds,
Put confidence in steps that backward lead;
Bethink ye not that we are only worms,
Born to produce the angel butterfly,
Which flies to justice without obstacle?
Why does your soul exalt itself in pride?
Imperfect insects as it were ye are,
Like grubs that fail of their development.

As to support a ceiling or a roof,
Often a figure in a corbel's place

⁸ Namely, to the higher circles of Purgatory, which are like steps cut in the side of the mountain.

Do not expose to the old enemy,
But save it from him who so tempteth it.
This last petition, O our Lord beloved,
For us no more is made, we want it not,
But is for them who after us remain."

Thus for themselves and us deliverance good
These spirits asking, went beneath their load,
Like that which sometimes in a dream is felt,
Tortured unequally, and circling round,
And wearied, up along the lowest cornice,
Purging away the darkness of the world.
If there for us they always offer prayers,
On earth for them what should be prayed and done,
By those who have the root of a good-will?
We should assist them to wash off the stains
They have borne hence, that purified and light
They may attain unto the starry spheres.

"As so may ruth and justice lighten ye
Speedily, that ye may exert your wings
To bear you upwards after your desire,
Direct us on which hand towards the stair
One quickest goes, and if than one way more,
Show us that one which easiest ascends:
For he that journeys with me, by the weight
Of Adam's flesh with which he is invested,
Is weak to mount, although against his will."

The words, which for reply they made to these
Which he, whom I accompanied, had spoken,
Were not to be distinguished whence they came;
But this was said: "To the right on the ledge,
Come with us, and a passage ye will find
That can be mounted by a living man.
And if I were not burdened by the rock

Which presses down upon my haughty neck
 Obliging me to keep my sight on earth,
 This one who lives yet, and has not been named,
 I would have viewed to see if him I knew,
 And to engage his pity for this load :
 Latin I was, from a great Tuscan sprung ;
 My sire Gulielmo Aldobrandeschi ;
 I know not if his name was ever with you. 60
 The ancient blood and celebrated deeds
 Of my progenitors made me so proud
 That of our common mother thinking not,
 In such contempt I all mankind esteemed,
 I died for it, as know the Siennese,
 And every man in Campagnatico.
 I am Umberto ;² not my harm alone
 Has pride occasioned, but my kinsfolk all
 It has dragged with itself to misery ;
 And here this burden I am forced to bear 70
 For it, until amends to God be made
 Here 'mid the dead, since not made 'mid the living."

The while I listened I bent down my face,
 And one of them, but not that one who spoke,
 Turned round beneath the load that troubled him,
 And saw and knew me, and called out to me,
 Keeping his eyes with difficulty fixed
 On me that stooping lowly with them went.
 "O," said I to him, "art not Oderisi,³
 The honour of Gubbio, and of that art 80
 Which is at Paris called illuminating ? "

² Umberto, Count of Santaflor in Tuscany, one of a haughty and powerful family. He was put to death by the Siennese at Campagnatico.

³ Oderisi of Gubbio in Urbino, an illuminator (or in Italian *miniature*) of books ; he is mentioned with commendation in Vasari's Life of Giotto.

"My friend," he said, "far brighter are the leaves
 Upon which Franco of Bologna⁴ paints :
 All honour is now his ; part only mine.
 Truly so courteous I had not been
 While I was living, through the great desire
 Of excellence on which my heart was set.
 For such pride here we pay the penalty :
 Yet here I had not been, if it were not
 That, while with power to sin, I turned to God.
 O the vain glory of the human mind,
 How quick the green upon the summit fades,
 Unless succeeded by some duller age !
 In painting Cimabue⁵ once believed
 He held the field ; now Giotto⁶ has the cry,
 So that he dims the reputation of the first.
 Thus has from one the other Guido⁷ snatched
 The fame of writing ; and he may be born
 Who will drive both of them from out the nest.
 For earthly fame is nothing but a puff
 Of wind that now blows hence, and thence anon,
 Changing its name as it its quarter changes.
 What more fame hast thou, if in age thou loose
 Thy flesh from thee than if thou come to death
 Before thou hast thy pap and rattle left,
 A thousand years hence ? which is a more brief
 Space in eternity, than an eye's twinkling
 Is to the sphere which slowest rolls above.
 With him who gains so little on his way
 In front of thee, once rang all Tuscany ;

⁴ Franco Bolognese, probably a pupil of Oderisi, is known by his works as a painter and illuminator of MSS. A Madonna by him, at Bologna, bears date 1313 (Kügler).

⁵ Cimabue b. at Florence 1240, d. soon after 1300.

⁶ Giotto the great scholar of Cimabue, and friend of Dante, b. 1276, d. 1336.

⁷ Guido Cavalcanti, the friend of Dante (already mentioned, *In. x.* 60), and the earlier poet Guido Guinicelli of Bologna, introduced again (*Purg. xxvi.* 92), are probably here intended.

Now in Sienna his name is hardly breathed,
 Where he was Lord what time was put to rout
 The wrath of Florence, which as arrogant
 Was at that time, as now it is brought low.
 Your reputation has the hue of grass,
 Which comes and goes, and that discolours it
 By which it issued tender from the earth."

Then I to him : "Thy truths implant my heart
 With good humility, and check my pride :
 But who is he, of whom you lately spoke?"
 He answered : "That is Provenzan Salvani,"
 And he is here for that he did presume
 Sienna all to bring into his hands.

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And thus he moves, and walks without repose
 Since when he died : such forfeiture must pay
 In satisfaction who was proud on earth."

Then I : "If every spirit that defers
 His penitence until his life's extreme,
 Remains below, nor hither upward mounts,
 Unless assisted by some faithful prayers,
 Until a time is passed long as he lived,
 How was arrival hither granted him?"

130

He said : "When he in greatest glory lived,
 Freely upon the Campo of Sienna,
 Laying aside all shame, he placed himself ;
 And there, his friend to rescue from the pain
 He suffered in captivity by Carlo,
 He wrought himself to quiver in each vein."

⁸ Lord of Sienna. He commanded on the Guibeline side when the Florentines were routed at Monte Aperto in 1260. He was taken and beheaded by the Florentines, in the battle between them and the Siennese, at Colle in Val d'Elsa in 1269. (Purg. xiii. 115.)

⁹ One Vigna was taken prisoner at the battle of Tagliacozzo, and was held by Charles of Anjou for a ransom of 10,000 pieces of gold. To raise this sum, Provenzan stood in the Campo or public place of Sienna, and begged for contributions until he was able to liberate his friend.

No more I tell, that which I speak is dark ;
But little time will pass before thy neighbours 140
Will act so that thou mayst this understand.¹
This deed of his released him from those bounds."

¹ A prediction that Dante in his exile would know how hard a thing it is to beg.

CANTO XII.

SCULPTURED EXAMPLES OF PRIDE.—LUCIFER, NIMROD
NIOBE, &c.—ASCENT TO THE SECOND CIRCLE.

COUPLED like oxen when they go in yoke,
I with that burdened spirit went along
Such time as my sweet teacher would permit :
But when he said : “ Leave him, and forward go,
For here with oars and canvas it is good
Much as may be for each to urge his bark ;”
Upright, as one is wont to walk, I drew
My person, notwithstanding that my thoughts
Depressed and bowed down still in me remained.
I had advanced, and followed willingly
The paces of my Master, and we both
Already showed how light we were become,
When he said to me : “ Downward turn thine eyes,
It will be pleasing to beguile the way
To view the floor on which thy footsteps rest.”

As to perpetuate their memory,
Over the buried, graves sunk in the earth
Display in sculpture what they were in life;
At which oft times men are to grief renewed
By pricking of that recollection,
Which only pious men to good incites ;

So saw I there, but closer to the life,
By rules of art with sculpture decorated
What jutted from the mount to form a way.

Him¹ I beheld who was created noble
More than all other creatures, down from heaven
Fall like a thunderbolt, upon one side.
I saw Briareus, transfix'd by the dart
Celestial, lie upon the other hand,
To the earth cumbersome in icy death. 30
I saw Thymbræus,² Pallas too and Mars
In arms yet standing round about their sire,
And looking on the giant's scattered limbs.
Nimrod I saw at foot of his great work,
As one confounded, gazing on the hosts,
That were at Shinar with him in their pride.
O Niobe, with what sad weeping eyes
I saw thee represented on the path
'Twixt seven and seven of thy children slain!
O Saul, beneath a weapon of thine own, 40
There wast thou seen upon Gilboa dead,
Which after felt not either dew or rain!³
O mad Arachne, thee I also saw
Half turned a spider, sad among the threads
Of thine own work, which ill for thee was spun!
O Rehoboam, not was threatening seen
Thine image there; but overwhelmed by fear
A chariot bore it, fleeing ere pursued!⁴
Further the solid pavement did set forth,
How to his mother Alcmaeon⁵ made dear 50

¹ Lucifer. ² Apollo, so called from his temple at Thymbra in Lydia.

³ 2 Sam. i. 21.

⁴ 1 Kings, xii. 18.

⁵ Alcmaeon's mother Eriphyle was bribed by the pride of possessing a golden necklace to discover the hiding-place of her husband Amphiaraus; by which he was forced to accompany the expedition against Thebes, in which he fell; and Eriphyle was put to death by her son in retribution for it.

Appear to be the wretched ornament.
It represented how his sons did fall
Within the temple on Sennacherib,⁶
And how they fled away and left him dead.
It showed the havoc, and the slaughter fell
Which Tomyris made when she to Cyrus said :
For blood thou thirstedst, take thy fill of blood.
It showed how in a rout to flight betook
The Assyrians, after Holofernes died,
And all that followed of their chastisement.
Troy I beheld in ashes and in pits ;
O Ilion, how wholly sunk and vile
The sculpture showed thee, as it there was seen !

He was a master of the style and pencil
Who traced the shadows and the forms which there
A subtle mind to admiration forced.
As dead the dead, the living seemed alive :
Clearer I had not seen reality
Than what I walked on, while I stooping went.
Therefore be proud and march with haughty looks,⁷
Children of Eve, nor downward bend the face,
Lest ye perceive how evil is your path !

Further along the mountain we had wound,
And of the sun's course there was more performed
Than was aware my mind pre-occupied ;
When he that ever forward on the watch
Proceeded, thus began : " Lift up thy head :
Time is no more, for going thus engrossed.
Yonder behold an Angel who prepares
To come towards us ; and behold how turns

⁶ 2 Kings, xix. 37.

⁷ Tomyris, Queen of the Massagetae, who threw the head of Cyrus into a vessel of blood, saying—*Satia te sanguine quem sitisti.*

From the day's service her sixth handmaiden.⁹
 Adorn with reverence thine acts and looks,
 That to assist thy mounting he may deign :
 Think that again this day will never dawn."

I to his admonitions was well used
 Not to lose time, in such wise that on this
 Matter he could not speak to me as deaf.
 Towards us came the creature beautiful,
 Arrayed in white and of such countenance
 As is the shining of the morning star. 90
 His arms he opened, and then spread his wings,
 Saying: "Approach, the stair is close at hand,
 And easily it may be mounted now ;
 To this announcement very few attain :
 O race of men, for upward flight create,
 Why do ye fall before the slightest blast ?"
 He led us on to where the rock was cut :
 Over my forehead here he brushed his wings,
 Then promised me a journey free from care.

As on the right hand, (to ascend the hill 100
 On which there stands the church⁹ which overlooks
 The well-ruled city, over Rubaconté,
 Is broken the stiff toil of the ascent
 By steps that were constructed in the time,
 When were secure the measures and the books ;
 So was this bank made easy, which descends

⁹ Noon is indicated, which is the sixth hour from sunrise at the Equinox.

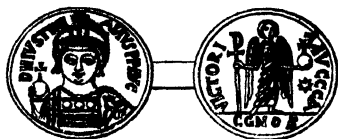
⁹ The church is San Miniato—Rubaconte, a bridge at Florence so called from the name of the chief magistrate of the year when it was built (1237). The integrity of that time is contrasted with the modern corruption of Florence, indicated by an allusion to two recent instances ; in one of which an erasure was made in the record of the evidence given in a law suit, in order to destroy the proofs of an unjust decision : and in the other of which, the size of the legal bushel was fraudulently diminished for the private gain of a public officer.

Here very steeply from the upper round :
Yet grazes one the tall rock on each side.

While we were moving thither our forms,
*Blessed are the poor in spirit,*¹ voices 110
So sang, as cannot be described in words.
Ah ! by how much are different these doors
From the infernal ! To this place with songs
They enter ; there with horrible laments.

Now we ascended by the holy steps,
And much more buoyant I appeared to be,
Than I had seemed before upon the plain :
Then I : " O Master, say what heavy thing
Has been removed from me, for scarce at all
Fatigue is known by me, as I proceed ?" 120
He answered me : " When the P's that remain
Already almost fading from thy brow,
Shall wholly be, as one now is, erased,
Thy feet will be so mastered by good-will,
That not only they shall not know fatigue,
But it will be delight to them to mount."
Then did I as a man that goes along
With something on his head, not known to him,
But that the signs of others breed a doubt :
Wherefore for certainty the hand lends aid, 130
And seeks and finds the thing, and service does
Which eyesight was not able to supply :
And with the finger of my right hand, plain
I found six letters only, which had marked
He of the keys upon me, on my brow :
Observing which thing my conductor smiled.

¹ Matthew, v. 3. One of the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount, is repeated in each circle of Purgatory.



CANTO XIII.

THE SECOND CIRCLE—THE ENVIOUS IN HAIRCLOTH AND WITH
SEALED EYES.—EXAMPLES OF LOVE—SAPIA

WE now were at the summit of the stair,
Where for the second time is interrupted
The mount which by ascending frees from sin.
There in like manner does a cornice bind
The mountain round, as does the former one ;
But than the other sooner forms its round.
There is no portraiture nor figure seen ;
The bank shows only and the simple path,
In livid colour of the rocky mass.

“ If here to ask our way we stay for souls,”
The poet reasoned, “ I am much afraid
That our decision would be long postponed : ”
Fixed then upon the sun he turned his eyes,
Made his right side the pivot of his wheel,
And of his body turned the left around.

“ O sweet light, in whose confidence I go
Upon this new path, do thou guide in it,”
He said, “ as best is guided in this place :
The earth thou warmest and dost give it light ;
Unless adversely other reasons prompt,
Thy radiance should ever be the guide.”

10

20

Far as on earth were measured by a mile,
 Already so far had we progress made
 Within a short time by our ready will ;
 And now towards us flying were perceived,
 Spirits, although not seen, who forth proclaimed
 Courteous entreatments to the board of love.
 The first voice passing us upon the wing,
 "*They have no wine,*"¹ in a loud tone proclaimed,
 And to the rear it went repeating it. 30
 And ere this wholly was to hearing lost,
 Retreating ; " I Orestes' am ; " another
 Exclaiming passed, but never lighted down.
 " O," said I, " Sire, these voices, what are they ? "
 And as I question made, behold a third,
 Saying : " Love them from whom ye have had ill ? "²
 Then my good Lord : " This circle punishes
 The vice of enviousness, and therefore are
 Handled by love the lashes of their whip :
 The bridle in a different note must sound ; 40
 I think that thou wilt hear it, as I trow,
 Before the pass of pardon thou attain :
 But look attentive through the atmosphere,
 And thou in front wilt people see who sit
 And each of them along the rock is placed."
 More than before I opened wide mine eyes ;
 I looked in front, and souls beheld in cloaks
 That differed not in colour from the rock.
 And ere we had much further progress made,
 I heard cried out : " O Mary, pray for us ; " 50
 And cried : " O Michael, Peter, and All Saints."
 I think that not upon the earth there lives

¹ The words of the mother of Jesus at the marriage in Cana, John, ii. 3—(Assisting the wants of others).

² The words of Pylades before Egistheus when striving with Orestes to be put to death in his stead—Cicero De Amicitia, 24—(Giving even life for others).

³ Matthew, v. 44—(Forgiveness of injuries).

So stern a man, as would not be provoked
 To pity by the thing which now I saw ;
 For, when I was so near to them arrived
 That their condition became manifest
 Unto mine eyes, I was in deep grief bathed.
 In coarsest sackcloth they seemed covered up,
 And each upon another's shoulders leaned,
 And all of them were by the bank sustained. 60
 The blind men thus, who their subsistence lack,
 In churches wait to beg for what they need,
 And one his head upon another leans,
 Because in mankind pity finds a place,
 Not only at the sound of spoken words,
 But at the sight which no less supplicates :
 And as no sun approaches to the blind,
 So on the shades of whom I just now spoke,
 The light of heaven will not shed itself ;
 Pierces an iron thread their eyelids all, 70
 And seals them, as with falcon unreclaimed
 Is done, because it will not still remain.

It seemed I did a wrong the while I went,
 Seeing the others, and not being seen ;
 Wherefore I turned to my wise counsellor.
 Well knew he what the silent one would say,
 And therefore waited not for my demand ;
 But said : " Speak out, and be thou brief and clear."
 Virgil was standing by me on that side
 The terraced road from which a man could fall, 80
 Because surrounded by no parapet :
 Upon my other side were the devout
 Shadows that by the suture horrible
 Were so oppressed, they bathed their cheeks in tears.
 To them I turned, and : " Race that art secure,"
 I thus began, " to see the highest Light,
 On which is only your desire intent,

As may grace soon resolve away the scum
 From off your conscience, so that purified
 By it the river of the mind may flow,
 Say, for it would be kind and dear to me,
 If is among you any Latin soul;
 It may be good for him, if him I know."

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"O brother mine, each is a citizen⁴
 Of one true city, but thou wouldest say
 Who lived in Italy in pilgrimage."
 It seemed to me, that I this answer heard,
 From further onwards than the place I held;
 Wherefore to listen I went onwardly.
 Among them I saw wait reply a shade
 As it appeared; and if one should ask, How?
 It held the chin raised as a blind man does.
 "Spirit," I said, "that for ascent art tamed,
 If thou art that one who has answered me,
 Make thyself known to me by place or name."

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"I was a Siennese," it said; "with these,
 The rest, I here do purge a guilty life,
 Weeping to Him to grant himself to us.
 I was not sapient although Sapia⁵
 I was called, and I was at others' ills
 Delighted more, than at my own success.
 And that thou mayst not think that I deceive,
 Hear if I was, as I have told thee, senseless.
 While I descended on the bridge of years,
 My fellow citizens were close to Collé
 Joined in a battle with their enemies;
 And I prayed God for that which he had willed.
 There they were beaten, and turned to the sad

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⁴ Hebrews, xi. 13; xiii. 14. Ephes. ii. 19.

⁵ A noble lady of Sienna, who, living in exile at Colle, prayed for the defeat of her countrymen at the battle in 1269 (Purg. xi. 121).

Passes of flight ; and when I saw the chase,
 I took to joy beyond all other things ; 120
 So that I upwards turned my daring face,
 Crying to God : Henceforth I fear thee not ;
 As at the first fine weather did the ousel.⁶
 I longed for peace with God when at the end
 Of my life ; and yet never would have been
 My just account by penitence decreased,
 Had it not been that mention made of me
 Pier Pettinagno⁷ in his holy prayers,
 In whom compassion for me did grow up.
 But who art thou that of our circumstances 130
 Goest demanding, wearing thine eyes free,
 As I suppose, and talkest drawing breath ? ”

“ Mine eyes,” I said, “ will also here be shut,
 But for short time ; for small is the offence
 Committed by me in the ways of envy.
 Greater the terror is, in which is held
 My spirit by the tortures of beneath,
 Already weighs on me the load below.”
 She then to me : “ Who has conducted thee
 Above among us, hoping to return ? ” 140
 And I : “ The one with me who speaks no word :
 I am alive ; and therefore ask of me
 O chosen soul, if thou wouldst have me stir
 For thee on earth again my mortal feet.”
 “ O, this is such a new thing to the ear,”
 She said, “ it is a great sign God thee loves ;
 Therefore assist me with thine orisons :
 And I implore by what thou lovest best,
 If ever thou the land of Tuscany tread,

⁶ In Lombardy the three last days of January are called *giorni della merla*, or “the blackbird’s days,” and are supposed to be especially cold, to punish the blackbird ; because once finding the season mild at that time, she boasted that she no longer feared January.

⁷ A hermit of great sanctity of Campi near Sienna.

That with my kin thou set my fame aright.
Them wilt thou see among the boasting race
Who hope in Talamoné,^s and thus lose
More hope than in the seeking the Diana ;
But more by it their admirals will lose."

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^s The Siennese, ambitious of naval and commercial power, endeavoured in vain to establish a port at Talamoné, and many lives were lost from the unhealthiness of the place. They also wasted large sums of money in attempting to reach a supposed subterranean river which was called the Diana.

CANTO XIV.

THE ENVIOUS CONTINUED—GUIDO DEL DUCA—RIVIERI DA
CALBOLL.—THE FAMILIES OF ROMAGNA.

“ Who may this be that circles round our mount,
Or ever death has given flight to him
And at his pleasure opes and shuts his eyes? ”
“ I know not who, but he is not alone :
Request him that he nearer would approach,
And gently greet him so that he may speak.”
Two spirits ¹ thus, that on each other leaned,
There on the right hand side conversed of me ;
Then to accost me upwards raised the face.
Spoke one of them : “ O spirit, that held fast ¹⁰
Yet in the body towards Heaven goest,
For charity console us, and impart
Whence art, and what thou art ; for thou dost cause
Such marvel at the grace accorded thee,
As fits a thing that never was before.”

Then I : “ Through middle Tuscany there flows
A river that in Falterona springs,

. 2)

¹ Guido del Duca of Brettinoro, and Rivieri da Calboli of Forli—both of Romagna.

And sates it not an hundred miles of course :
 Upon its banks this body I obtained.
 To tell thee who I am, would be in vain ;
 As yet my name has not been sounded much.”

“ Rightly thy meaning if I penetrate,
 With understanding,” answer made me then
 He who spoke first, “ thou speakest of the Arno.”
 And said the other to him : “ Why conceals
 This man the proper title of the stream,
 As one would do with an accurséd thing ?”
 On which the shade that questioned was of this,
 Replied to him : “ I know not ; but deserves
 To perish righteously that valley’s name ;
 For from its origin, (where is so swollen
 The mountain range, whence was Pelorus torn,
 That in few places it exceeds that show ²) .
 Down to the part where to restore it comes
 That which the heavens drink up from the sea,
 Whence streams draw that which goes along with them,
 Virtue is hunted like an enemy
 By all, as if she were a snake, by hap
 Of situation, or bad use which rules :
 Whence have their nature in such manner changed
 The dwellers in that miserable vale,
 ’Tis as if Circe fed them with her meats.
 Among ³ brute swine who acorns more deserve
 Than other food for human use designed,
 It at the first directs its slender course :

² The Apennines (described as the range with which Pelorus, the Sicilian promontory adjacent to Italy, was supposed to have been once continuous), are said to be most abundant in waters on Falterona, whence both the Arno and the Tiber spring.

³ The course of the Arno is described through Casentino, the country of the luxurious Counts Guido (In. xxx. 65)—then turning sharply away from the curn of Arezzo,—flowing by the wolves of Florence,—and falling into the sea after passing the foxes of Pisa.

Meets curs next, lower downwards as it comes,
More full of snarling than of power for ill.
And to them scornfully it turns the snout :
Falling it marches on, and as it grows,
So more and more the dogs to wolves turned finds ³¹
That miserable and accurséd stream.
Proceeding then by many a deep reach,
It meets the foxes so replete with fraud
They fear no talent that can master them.
Nor will I cease to speak as overheard ;
It will be good for this man, if he know
That which a truthful soul unfolds to me.
Thy grandson ' I behold, who has become
The hunter of those wolves upon the bank
Of that fierce stream, and he puts all to flight. ³²
He sells the flesh, while yet it is alive,
And after kills them like a worn-out ox :
Many of life, himself of praise deprives.
Bloody he issues from the savage wood ;
And leaves it such that in a thousand years
It will not be restored to its first state."

As on announcement of some future ills
The face is troubled of the man that hears,
From wheresoever menaces the risk ;
The other spirit thus I saw, who turned ³³
Stood listening, grow troubled and perplexed,
As he received the words addressed to him.
The words of one of them, the other's looks
Gave me desire to ascertain their names ;
And with entreaties mixed, I asked for them.
On which the spirit that first spoke to me,
Began again : "Thou wouldest have me stoop

³¹ Fulcieri da Calboli, who was chief magistrate of Florence in 1302, and was bribed by the Blacks to destroy several of the White party.

To do for thee what thou for me wilt not :
 But since God chooses that in thee should shine
 His love so much, I will not niggard be ;
 Know me then therefore as Guido del Duca.
 With enviousness my blood was so inflamed,
 That if I ever saw a man rejoice,
 Thou mightst have seen me overspread with spite.
 Such harvest gather I from what I sowed.
 O human race, why dost thou set the heart
 Where needful 'tis partakers to exclude ?⁵
 This one is Rinier, the praise and fame
 Of Calboli's inheritance, where none
 Has to his virtue heir since made himself :
 And not only his blood is rendered bare,
 Twixt Po and Reno, and the hills and sea,⁶
 Of all good requisites for truth and joy ;
 But all within these boundaries is full
 Of poisonous stocks, so that it will be long
 For cultivation ere it loses them.
 Where is good Licio, Arrigo Manardi,
 Pier Traversaro, and Guido Carpigna ?
 O Romagnese, how turned to bastardy !
 While in Bologna does a Fabbro spring,
 A Bernardin di Foseo in Faenza,
 A noble sapling from a humble root.⁷

" O Tuscan, marvel not that I lament,
 When I remember with Guido da Prata,
 The Ugolin of Azzo once with us,
 Federigo Tignoso and his kin,
 The Traversari and the Anastagi ;
 (And each of these is disinherited)
 The knights and dames, the leisures and the toils,

⁵ See Purg. xv. 45.

⁶ The limits of Romagna.

⁷ While the good old nobility of Romagna have disappeared or degenerated, persons of obscure origin have elsewhere risen to eminence.

Inviting us to love and courtesy,
 Where now all hearts to villany are turned.
 O Brettinoro, why dost thou not fly
 Now that thy family from thee is gone,
 And many others, to avoid the guilt?
 Well does Bagnacaval to cease its line,
 Ill Castrocaro does, and Conio worse,
 That to produce such Counts it further strives;
 Well will be the Pagani when Demonio
 Is taken from them; but at no time pure
 Ever the memory of them will be.
 O Ugolin of Fantoli, secure
 Thy name is, for is not expected more
 That which, degenerate, might sully it.
 But, Tuscan, go thy way, for now I would
 Rather lament than further converse hold;
 Our country has so moved my mind to grief."

We were aware that these beloved souls
 Heard us go onwards; and as they said nought
 They made us in our path to feel secure.
 Soon as we were upon our way alone,
 Broke forth, as lightning when it cleaves the air,
 A voice which met us and ejaculated:
 "*Every one that findeth me shall slay me;*"
 Then passed like thunder as it rolls away
 When suddenly disperses the storm cloud.
 Soon as from this the hearing had relief,
 Behold another with so loud a crash,
 It was like rapid following thunder peals:
 "I am Aglauros* that was turped to stone."
 On this to draw me nearer to the bard,
 Backward instead of forward I took steps.

* The words of Cain. Gen. iv. 14.

* Envious of Mercury's love for her sister Herse, and turned to stone by him. Ovid, Met. ii. 559.

The air was now on every side at rest ;
And he to me said : " That was the hard bit
Which should confine a man within his bounds.
For you, the bait ye seize, so that the hook
Of the old enemy towards him drags you,
And therefore little boots or rein or call.
Heaven invokes you, and around you spreads,
Displaying to you its eternal beauties,
And only on the earth are fixed your eyes ;
He therefore who sees all things lashes you."

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CANTO XV.

ASCENT TO THE THIRD CIRCLE.—THE ANGRY.—EXAMPLES OF
FORBEARANCE SEEN IN A VISION.—THE VIRGIN MARY.—
PISISTRATUS.—STEPHEN.

So much as 'twixt the third hour's finishing
And day's beginning, of the sphere is seen,
Which is in restless motion like a child,
Thus much there seemed before the fall of night
Remaining of his circuit to the sun ;¹
It was the evening there, here middle night,
And smote directly on the face the rays,
Because so rounded by us was the mount,
That now we went straightforward to the west ;
When I was conscious that my vision quailed¹⁰
Before a splendour greater than that first,
And at this unknown thing I was amazed.
On which I raised mine hands above the brows
Of mine eyes, and thus made myself a screen
To abate the excessive splendour of the sight.
As when from water or a looking glass
The rays rebound upon the other side,
Ascending upwards in a similar path

¹ It is three hours to sunset at the Mountain of Purgatory, and mid-
night in Italy, which would be the proper difference of time between
the two places ; one being at the antipodes of Jerusalem, and Italy being,
according to the geography of the age, forty-five degrees west of Palestine.

To that in which they fell, and only leave
 The falling stone's path in the same degree,
 As shows us nature and experiment ;
 So seemed I by the light that was reflected
 In front of me in that place, to be struck :
 From which most quick was I to free my sight.²

20

" Sweet Father, who is this, from whom I cannot
 Shelter mine eyes however much I strive,"
 I said, " and who towards us seems to move ? "
 " Be not surprised, if as yet dazzles thee
 The family of heaven," he replied :
 " This one is sent to invite men to ascend.
 Soon will it be that looking on these things
 Will not be painful, but will give delight,
 As much as nature fits thee to receive."

30

When to the blessed Angel we were come,
 " Enter ye here," he said with joyful voice,
 " Upon a stair far less steep than the last."
 We mounted, having somewhat onwards moved,
 And "*Blessed are the merciful*" there was
 Chanted behind, and " Thou that win'st, rejoice."
 My Master and myself the two alone
 Ascended up, and as we went, methought
 To gain some profit from his conversation,
 And to him turned I, asking of him thus :
 " What meant to say that spirit of Romagna,
 When speaking of excluded partnership ? "³

40

He then to me : " Of his own greatest fault
 He knows the sin, and therefore marvel not

² The light of God is reflected upon Dante from the angel, and it is compared with the ordinary reflection of light making equal angles with the perpendicular (indicated as the falling stone's path) to the reflecting surface.

³ Purg., xiv. 87.

If he rebuke it : less will be to mourn.
Because your wishes are concentrated
Where by participation some is lost,
Envy its bellows works upon your sighs.
But if the love of the supremest sphere,
Your aspirations upwards had conveyed
This apprehension would not fill your breast,
For there the more that ' this is ours ' we say,
By so much each possesses more of good,
And more of love within that cloister burns."

" From being content I further am removed,"
I said, " than if thou hadst said nought to me,
And more of doubt I gather in my mind.
How can it be that good distributed,
The more possessors makes to be more rich
In it, than if by fewer it were held ? "
Then he to me : " Because thou dost bestow
Only thy mind upon the things of earth,
Thou pluckest darkness from the truthful light.
' That Good, ineffable and infinite,
' Dwelling above, in such wise flows to love,
As on a polished body rays impinge.
It brings as much affection as it finds,
So that however far may love extend
The eternal influence beyond expands;
And the more persons who above aspire,
More good is there to love, and more of love,
And, like a mirror, each reflects on each.
And if my reasons satisfy thee not,
Thou wilt see Beatrice, and she in full
Will this and every other doubt remove.
Hasten thou only that may vanish soon,
As have already two, the five imprints
Which are healed up by being sorrowful."
And as I would have said : " Thou dost suffice ;"

Come to the other round I found myself,
So that mine eager eyes my silence claimed.

There in a vision, as it seemed to me,
Ecstatic I was suddenly caught up,
And in a temple I much people saw :
One was a woman entering with the air
Of a fond mother saying : " O my son,
Wherefore in this sort hast thou dealt with us ?" ⁹⁰
Behold thy father and I sorrowing
Have sought thee,"⁴ and as here she ceased to speak,
The first part of my vision disappeared.
Then showed another woman with such streams
As trouble down the cheeks is wont to pour,
Caused by great rage against some other one ;
And said : " If thou art ruler of this town,
(Whose name created 'mongst the gods such strife,⁵
And whence all sciences have spread abroad,) ¹⁰⁰
Take vengeance on this daring pair of arms
That have our daughter clasped, Pisistratus ;"
And then the ruler showed benign and calm,
And answered her with aspect temperate :
" How should we deal with him that wishes ill,
If he that loves us were by us condemned ?"⁶
Next I saw men incensed by heat of rage,
Stoning to death a young man ;' in loud voice
They cried to one another : " Slay him, slay ;"
And I beheld him kneeling down, for death
Grew heavily upon him, on the earth ; ¹¹⁰
But he his eyes made ever heaven's gates,
The while he prayed God in that agony,

⁴ Luke ii. 48.

⁵ The contest between Minerva and Neptune for the naming of Athens.

⁶ The story of the forbearance of Pisistratus to the youth, who had kissed his daughter in public, is told by Valerius Maximus, v. 1.

⁷ Stephen—Acts vii. 54.

That he his persecutors would forgive,
With such a look as to compassion moves.

Soon as my spirit from abroad returned
To objects which externally subsist,
I knew that I had wandered, though in truth.
My leader, who then might have me observed
Do as a man, who rouses him from sleep,
Said: "What is this, canst not thyself support? 120
For thou hast gone for more than half a league
Closing the eyes and with entangled legs
Like one that is by wine or slumber seized."
"O my loved Father, if thou wilt give heed,"
I said, "I will relate what I have seen,
While in that wise I lost the use of feet."
And he: "If thou didst wear an hundred masks
Over thy face, from me would not be hid
Thy thoughts, however trifling they might be;
What thou hast seen, was to destroy excuse 130
From opening to the streams of peace thy heart,
Which from the eternal fountain are diffused.
I asked not, 'How dost fare?' as would have done
One that has eyesight which cannot perceive
When severed from the soul the body lies:
I asked to give thee strength upon thy feet:
To stimulate the idle there is need
To use their wakefulness as it returns." 140

Attentively we through the evening went
Onwards, as far as eye could penetrate,
Fronting the shining and belated rays:
And lo! by slow degrees appears a smoke
Coming towards us, darkling as the night,
Nor was there any way to escape from it:
And this destroyed the sight and the pure air.



CANTO XVI.

THE THIRD CIRCLE—THE ANGRY IN THICK SMOKE—MARCO
LOMBARDO—THE INFLUENCES OF THE SKY—TEMPORAL
AND SPIRITUAL POWER OF ROME

THE gloom of hell, and of a night bereft
Of every star beneath a barren sky,
When much as may be it is dark with clouds,
Gave not so thick a mantle to my sight,
As did the smoke which there surrounded me,
Nor to the touch such crude envelopment ;
Open it suffered not the eyes to be :
On which my faithful and sagacious escort
Offered his shoulder, coming to my side.
As goes a blind man in his leader's steps,
Lest he should wander or encounter make

With what might harm him, or perchance might kill,
So went I through that foul and grievous air
To my conductor listening, who said
Only: "Beware lest from me thou remove."

Voices I heard, and every one as seemed
In name of peace and mercy did beseech
The Lamb of God to take away their sins.
Ever did they commence with "Lamb of God!"¹
There was one word and measure to them all, 20
So that among them all was harmony.
"Are not these spirits, Master, whom I hear?"
I said: and he to me: "Thou guessest truth,
And they to loose the bonds of anger go."

"O who mayst thou be that dost cleave our smoke,
And holdest converse with us, as if thou
By calends still didst portion out the time?"
Thus was it spoken by a single voice,
On which the Master said to me: "Reply,
And ask him if by this way one ascends." 30
Then I: "O creature that dost purify,
Fair to return to him that fashioned thee,
A marvel thou wilt hear if thou draw nigh."
"Far as permitted I will follow thee,"
He said, "and if the smoke permits not sight,
Together sound will keep us in its stead."
Then I began: "In those integuments
Which death unlooses, I above proceed,
And I came hither by the way of Hell;
If God then has me to his grace received 40
So far that he wills I his court should see,
In manner quite beyond all modern use,
Conceal not thou, who thou before death wast,

¹ John, i. 29.

But tell, and say if I seek right the pass,
And thy words shall become to us our guides."

"I was a Lombard, and was Marco² called :
I knew the world, and I that virtue loved,
From which each one has now unstrung the bow :
For the ascent ye go on the right way."
Replied he thus, and added : "I entreat ³¹
That when above thou wouldst make prayer for me."
I then to him : "I pledge thee by my faith
To do the thing thou askest ; but I burst
Within with doubt unless myself I open.
First it was easy, but is doubled now
By thine opinion, for I am confirmed
By this, and what from elsewhere I collate.³
Truly the world is wholly destitute
Of every virtue, as thou sayst to me,
And is with viciousness o'erspread and filled ; ³²
But I entreat that thou wouldst add the cause,
That I may know it, and may others teach,
For some in heaven place it, some on earth."

A deep breath, forced by sorrow to a groan,
He first sighed forth, and then began : "O Brother,
The world is blind : well from it mayst thou come.
Ye, who are living, every reason seek
Above in the skies only, as if all
Moved of necessity along with them.
If this were so, in you would be destroyed ³³
Free will, and there would be no righteousness
In joy for good, and punishment for ill.
The skies initiate your acts at first :
I say not all, but granting that I did,

² Marco Lombardo, a noble Venetian, and friend of Dante.

³ Namely what had been said by Guido del Duca, of the degeneracy of man, in *Purg.* xiv.

Light is afforded you of good and ill,
 And a free choice, which if it be exerted
 In the first contests with the skies, endures ;
 After, it conquers all, if nourished well.
 To greater power, and a higher nature,
 Though free, ye are subjected : this creates
 A mind in you beyond the skies' control :
 Hence by the present world if led astray
 In you the reason is, and yours the blame ;
 Of this I am to thee a witness true.

" Came from the hand of Him, well pleased with it
 Ere it existed, like a little child
 With tears and smiles that acts its infant life,
 The soul in purity, which nothing knows,
 Except that from its well-pleased Maker sent,
 It eager turns to what amuses it.
 At first it tastes the joy of trifling things ;
 Cheated by them, it follows after them,
 Unless some guide or rein its wish directs.
 Hence as a bridle laws must be ordained ;
 There must be governors, who can discern
 At least the tower of the city true.
 The laws exist, but who puts hand to them ?
 No one : because the shepherd who takes lead
 Can chew the cud, but does not part the hoof.⁴
 Wherefore the people, who their leader see
 Seek only the good things themselves desire,
 Feed upon such, and nothing ask beyond.
 Well mayst thou judge that evil governance
 Is the occasion of a guilty world,
 And not a nature in you turned corrupt.

⁴ Leviticus, xi. 4. In mystical interpretation, the chewing of the cud signifies the duty of serious meditation on God's word ; and the division of the hoof signifies the discerning between good and evil,—between God's institutions and men's inventions.

Rome, that made good the world, accustomed was
 To have two suns, which one and other path
 Made manifest, the world's and that of God.
 One has the other quenched ; the sword is joined
 With the crook, and together that the two 110
 Should go, must of necessity ill suit ;
 Because when joined they fear each other not.
 If thou dost not believe me, view their fruit ;
 For every plant is best known by its seed.
 In the land washed by Adige and by Po,
 Was courtesy and valour only found,
 Ere Frederick unto the contest came.*
 Now in security may traverse it
 Whoever is unwilling, in his shame
 To meet with good men, to encounter them. 120
 Yet are there three old men, in whom reproves
 The former age the new ; to them seems late
 Their transference to a better world by God ;
 The good Gherardo, Conrad of Palazzo,
 And Guido of Castel,⁶ the better named
 The simple Lombard in the tongue of France.
 Confess to day then, that the Church of Rome,
 Two kinds of power uniting in herself,
 Sinks in the mire and fouls herself and load."

I said : " O Marco mine, thou reasonest well, 130
 Now I discern why from the heritage
 The sons of Levi were prohibited.⁷
 But who is this Gherardo that for proof
 Thou sayest is left us of the bygone race,
 As a rebuke to this degenerate age ?"

⁵ Lombardy was in a happy state until the quarrels between the Popes and the Emperor, in the time of Frederick 2nd.

⁶ Gherardo da Cammino, Lord of Trevigi—Conrad da Palazzo, a gentleman of Brescia—Guido da Castello, of Reggio. The French called all Italians Lombards.

⁷ Deuteronomy, xviii. 1.

“ Either thy speech deceives, or is to try me,”
He answered, “ for addressing me in Tūscan,
It seems of good Gherardo thou know’st nought.
I know him by no other added name,
Unless I take one from his daughter Gaia.” ¹⁴⁰
God be with you, with you no more I go :
Behold the light which streaming through the smoke,
Brighter now grows ; and I must needs depart,
For there an Angel is, before he come.”
He spoke thus, and no more to me gave heed.

⁸ Who was a celebrated person in her time.

CANTO XVII.

EXAMPLES OF ANGER SEEN IN A TRANCE.—THE FOURTH CIRCLE.
—THE SLOTHFUL.—THE LOVE OF THE SOUL FOR GOOD AND
EVIL.

RECOLLECT, Reader, if among the hills
A mist has caught thee, through which thou hast looked,
Not otherwise than through his film a mole;
How when the dense and moisture laden steams
Begin to clear themselves away, the disc
Of the sun through them feebly penetrates ;
And thine imagination will be ripe
To know the way in which I saw again
The sun at first, now just about to set.
So mine own measuring with the faithful steps 10
Of my lord, from such vapour I came forth,
To the rays sunk now on the lower slopes.

O force of fantasy, transporting us
Beyond ourselves, so that a man heeds not
Although a thousand trumpets round him clang,
What can thee move when rouse thee not the senses ?
Moves thee the light which is in heaven shaped
Spontaneous or by will that sends it down.

Of her ¹ impiety, who changed her form
 For that bird's which in singing most delights, 20
 On my imagination was the impress traced ;
 And here my faculties were so ingrossed
 Within themselves, that came not from without
 What would have been at other times received.
 Afterwards entered my deep reverie
 One crucified,² full of disdain and scorn
 In his regard, and so he suffered death :
 Around him stood great Ahasuerus,
 Esther his wife, and the just Mordecai,
 That was so perfect in his words and deeds : 30
 And as this image of the mind broke up
 Of itself, in the manner of a bubble
 Failing the water within which it forms ;
 A damsel ³ next upon my vision rose,
 Bitterly weeping, and exclaimed : " O Queen
 Why in thy rage hast thou destruction sought ?
 Thyself thou hast killed not to lose Lavinia :
 Me thou hast lost ; I am she that laments,
 Mother, at thine before another's death."

As slumber is disturbed if suddenly 40
 The new day streams upon the eyes close shut,
 And broken, struggles ere it wholly dies :
 So fell my mental images to earth,
 Soon as a light upon my visage struck
 Greater than that in our experience.
 Myself I turned to see where I might be ;
 When said a voice : " By this way ye ascend ;

¹ Philomela, changed into the nightingale after her cruel revenge upon Tereus. Ovid. Met. vi. 421.

² Haman—Esther, vii. The English version uses "hanged" for "crucified" as in Acts x. 39.

³ Lavinia, mourning for her mother Amata, who favoured the marriage of Lavinia with Turnus, and hanged herself upon the news of his death, which consigned her to Æneas. Æneid, vii—xii. 600.

Withdrew me this from every other thought,
And caused in me anxiety so strong
To see who might it be, who thus had spoke, 50
It would not until satisfied have ceased.
As at the sun, which crushes our sight,
And in excess of light its figure shrouds,
So did my faculties at this point fail.

“ This is that holy spirit who upon
The way, that upward leads, unasked directs,
And in his own light he himself conceals.
To us he does, as one would to himself ;
Who waits for asking, when he knows the want,
Already gives denial churlishly : 60
To such great welcome we should lend our feet ;
Ere darkness comes on let us speed to mount ;
After, it may not be, till day return.”
Thus my conductor said, and I with him
My footsteps bent towards a flight of stairs :
And soon as I upon the first step was,
As it were moving wings I near me felt
Winnowing my face, and heard said : “ *Blessed are*
The peacemakers, from foul rage that are free.”
Already so much were above us raised 70
The sun’s last rays, upon which follows night,
That stars shone out to us on every side ;
O vigour mine, why dost thou fade away ?
Thus to myself I said, for I perceived
To cease awhile the power of my limbs.

Come to a part we were where did not rise
Upwards the stair, and we were brought to rest,
In manner of a ship that meets the shore :
I listened for a space if I could hear
Within this novel circle anything. 80
Then to my Master turned I round and said :

"Belovéd Father, tell me what offence
 Is purged within the circle where we stand?
 For though our footsteps pause, let not thy speech."
 And he to me: "Deficient love of good
 Is to its duty in this place restored;
 Here plies again the slothfully worked oar:
 But that more fully yet thou mayst perceive,
 Address thy mind to me, and thou shalt have
 Some wholesome fruitage from this our delay."

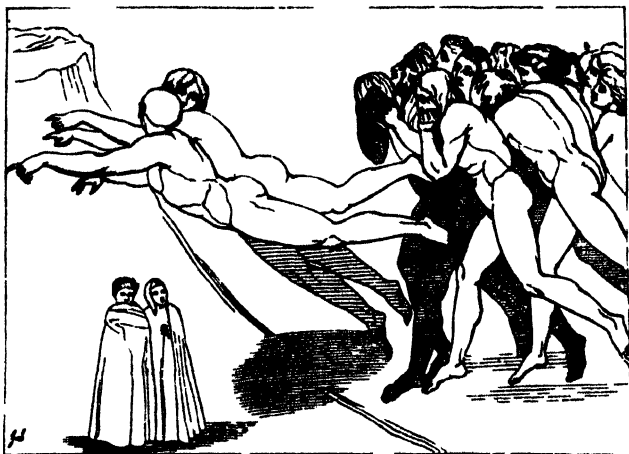
"Neither Creator nor created thing,
 My son," he thus began, "was without love
 Natural, or of the will; as thou dost know.
 Always the natural is from error free;
 The other in an evil end may err,
 Or in excessive or deficient strength.
 While it is well directed primally,
 Or secondarily restrains itself,
 It cannot be a cause of wicked joy;
 But when it turns to ill, or with more zeal
 Or less than should be, after good it runs,
 Against its maker then the thing made works.
 Hence thou mayst understand how needs must be
 Love the seed in you of all excellence,
 And of all acts deserving punishment.
 Further, since cannot from the benefit
 Of its own subject, love be ever turned,
 From hating of themselves all things are safe;
 And because cannot in division live,
 Or standing by itself, what comes of God,
 From hating him all passion is shut out.

⁴ In this and other similar passages in the Divine Comedy, most of Dante's opinions may be identified with those of the Scholastic Philosophy, as expounded by Thomas Aquinas. Of this, however, it is conceived that this general indication is all that is necessary or desirable.

"Remains, if rightly I divide the theme,
 It is our neighbour's ill we love; and this
 Love in three ways is gendered in your clay.
 There is that from his neighbour's suffering
 Looks for advancement; only for this longs,
 That he may be debased from his high state:
 There is that honour, power, grace, and fame
 Fears to lose, lest another should succeed,
 Which so afflicts him, he would have it not: 120
 There is that is aroused by injuries,
 And thus becomes a glutton in revenge;
 Such one is known to plan his neighbour's harm.
 Downwards from hence this triple-formed desire
 Bewails itself: now of another learn
 Which follows good in measure badly ruled.

"Vaguely of some good every one conceives,
 And longs for it, in which his soul may rest;
 Wherefore strives each one to attain to it.
 If to learn this a sluggard love impels, 130
 Or to acquire it, this terraced round
 After fit penitence for this torments.
 There is a good which makes not happy man:
 It is not happiness, nor is the good
 Essence of every good fruit and root.
 Desire that is too much to this set loose
 Above us is tormented in three rounds;
 But how is justified its threefold mode
 Nothing I say, that thou mayst search thyself."^s

^s The three sins of Pride, Envy, and Anger are purified in the three circles of Purgatory below this one, in which Acedia or Sloth is dealt with. Avarice, Gluttony, and Luxury, are purged away in the three circles above this one.



CANTO XVIII.

THE FOURTH CIRCLE CONTINUED—FREE WILL—THE SLOTHFUL
IN A RUSHING BAND—EXAMPLES OF SPEED AND ZEAL—
EXAMPLES OF THE CONTRARY

HAD made an ending of his reasonings
The lofty teacher, and attentive looked
Into my face if I appeared content :
And I, whom now excited a new thirst,
Outwardly silent, said within : Perchance
My questionings too frequent trouble him.
But the truth-loving father who would meet
The timid wish that did not show itself,
The while he spoke emboldened me to speak.
Then I : "O Master, mine eyesight revives
So at thy light, that I distinctly see

Far as thy reasoning carries or describes.
Further I pray thee, O my father dear,
To explain the love to which thou hast referred
Every good action and its opposite."

"Direct," he said, "to me the quick set eyes
Of intellect, and to thee will be clear
Those blind ones' error who set up as guides.
The soul which is created apt for love,
Wanders around to all things which delight, 20
Soon as it wakes to pleased activity.
Your power of fancy, of the real thing
An image draws, and fixes it within,
So that the mind upon it turns its view :
And, if in gazing it is seized by it,
This seizure love is ; this a nature is
That is by pleasure newly fixed in you.
Like then as fire will upwardly ascend,
By virtue of its form for rising made,
To where it dwells more in its element : 30
Thus the rapt spirit enters into love,
Which is a motion spiritual, nor rests,
Until enjoying the desired object.
Now may be known to thee how much is hid
The truth from those who hold as their belief
That all affection in itself is good :
Perchance indeed its subject matter seems
'To be good always : but not every seal
Is good, although the wax be excellent."

"Thy words, and my mind after following," 40
Answered I him, "have taught me what is love :
But this has made me yet more full of doubt,
For if love from without is proffered us,
And with no other steps the mind can go,
If it go right or wrong, it has no blame."

He then to me : " As far as reason sees,
I can inform thee : further thou must look
Only to Beatrice ; that is work for faith.
Every substantial form¹ that different
From matter is, but is with it united, 30
Residing in it has a special virtue,
Which without operation is not felt,
Nor shows itself except by its effect,
As by the green leaves life does in a plant :
Farther, from whence the apprehension comes
Of the first notions, men are ignorant,
And of the bent of the first appetites
That are in you, like instinct in the bees
To make their honey : and this primal will
Admits of no desert of praise or blame. 40
And that with this the others may conform,
There is an innate virtue which directs,
And keeps guard at the threshold of assent.
This is the first cause from which emanate
The grounds of your desert, according as
Good and bad wishes it rejects or garners.
They who in reasoning have attained the depths,
Were conscious of this innate liberty,
And to the world have left their moral schemes.
Allowing then that by necessity 70
Arises every wish that in you burns,
With you the power to controul it lies.
This noble virtue Beatrice intends
By Free Will, and remember further thou
To think of this, if e'er she speak of it."

The moon, belated to the middle night,
Less numerous made appear to us the stars,

¹ In the Scholastic Philosophy "substantial form" is that which essentially makes a thing to be what it is. Here the human soul is denoted as being an essence different from matter, but joined with it ;

Shaped like a cauldron and all fiery,²
 And rode across the heavens in the course
 Illumined by the sun, when one at Rome 80
 Sees him 'twixt Corsica and Sardinia set :
 And the illustrious shade, by whom is famed
 Pietola³ more than any Mantuan town,
 Had freed me from the burden of my load :
 Whereon I having reasons plain and clear
 Received in answer to my questioning,
 Stood like a man that is entranced in sleep.
 But was removed from me this somnolence
 By people suddenly, that in the rear
 Of our shoulders had approached to us now : 90
 And as Ismenus and Asopus⁴ saw,
 Along their banks at night, a crowd and rush,
 What time the Thebans upon Bacchus called ;
 So through this circle rushed with hasty steps
 Advancing, far as I of them could see,
 Those whom good will and just desire spurred on.
 'They were soon with us, for at running pace
 Proceeded all of that vast multitude,
 And two in front of them bewailing cried :
 " Mary with haste to the hill country went ; " 100
 And Cæsar to make conquest of Ilerda,
 Struck at Marsilia and passed on to Spain."⁵
 " O speed ye, speed ye, not to lose the time,
 With scanty love," the others following cried ;
 " May striving to do well restore to grace ! "

whereas the souls of brutes are material, and angels are altogether immaterial.

² The moon now in the fifth night of her wane, is like a cauldron seen in profile.

³ The modern name of Andes, the village near Mantua, in which Virgil was born.

⁴ Rivers in Boeotia.

⁵ Luke i. 39.

⁶ Cæsar in his rapid movement into Spain, B.C. 49, left his lieutenants to reduce Marseilles, while he hastened onwards to defeat the forces of Pompeius at Ilerda.

"O ye in whom the present fervid zeal
 Perchance redeems neglect and indolence
 Shown by you in lukewarmness to do good,
 This man who lives, for I deceive you not,
 Wishes to mount, so soon as shines the sun ; 110
 Inform him therefore where the passage lies."
 Such were the words that from my leader fell :
 And one of those souls answered : " Follow thou
 After us, and the opening thou wilt find.
 We are so filled with the desire to move,
 We may not stay ; and therefore pardon us
 If thou for rudeness take our debt to justice.
 I was San Zeno's abbot at Verona,⁷
 Under the rule of Barbarossa good,
 Of whom unhappy Milan yet can tell. 120
 There is⁸ that has one foot now in the grave
 Who soon will suffer for that monastery,
 And that he ever held it will lament ;
 Because his son, deformed in his whole frame,
 And in his mind worse, and of bastard blood,
 In room of its true pastor he had put."

I know not if he said more, or was mute,
 So far from us by this time he was swept ;
 But this I heard, and to retain was glad.
 And he who succoured me in every need, 130
 Said : " Turn thee thither, and thou wilt see two
 Approach who give rebuke to slothfulness."
 Following behind the rest, they said : " First were
 The people dead, for whom the sea did part,
 Ere Jordan looked on his inheritors."

⁷ Alberto, Abbot of San Zeno, in the time of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, who took and destroyed Milan in 1162.

⁸ Alberto della Scala of Verona, who made his natural son Giuseppe Abbot of San Zeno in 1292.

⁹ Numbers xxvi. 68.

And they ¹ who could not undergo the toil
To its conclusion with Anchises' son,
Consigned themselves to an inglorious life."
Afterwards when so far from us had moved.
These shadows, that no more they could be seen, ¹⁴⁰
A novel thought within me took its rise,
From which proceeded others different ;
And thus from one I on another dreamed,
Until mine eyes in wandering I closed,
And so transferred my reverie to sleep.

¹ The Trojans who remained in Sicily and did not accompany Æneas to Italy. *Æneid*, v. 711.

CANTO XIX.

DREAM OF THE SIREN.—THE FIFTH CIRCLE.—THE AVARICIOUS
AND PRODIGAL PROSTRATE ON THE GROUND — POPE
ADRIAN V.

UPON the hour when cannot the day's heat
Longer repel the coldness of the moon,
By Earth or else by Saturn overcome ;
What time the Geomants their Greater Fortune ¹
See in the East before the break of day
Rise in a tract that will not long be dark ;
A woman, stammering, came into my dream,
With squinting eyes, and of distorted form,
Her hands cut off, and of a pallid hue.
I looked on her ; and as the sun revives ¹⁰
The chilly limbs on which the night has pressed,
So my regard restored to liberty
Her tongue, and after straightened all of her,
In little time, and her distracted face
Lit with such colour as love wishes for.
Soon as she thus had got her speech set free,

¹ Geomancy was a kind of divination performed by striking the ground at random with a staff, and prognostics were obtained from the configurations of the points thus marked. The luckiest of these was the Fortune Major or Greater Fortune, and resembled the grouping of certain stars in one of the Moon's houses so called, between Aquarius and Capricorn ; and which would be rising four hours before the Sun, when he is in Aries. Therefore the time indicated is about 2 A.M. See the Arab Calendar in Libri's *Scienze Math. en Italie*, i. p. 408.

Commenced she singing so that not with ease
I could have torn away from her my mind.
"I am," she sang, "I am the Siren sweet,
That mariners in middle sea destroys ;
So full I am of pleasure to the ear,
I drew Ulysses from his wandering way
To my song ; and whoever stays with me,
Seldom escapes, so wholly I engross."
Her mouth was hardly yet shut up again,
When swift a holy Lady there appeared
Close at my side to put her to the rout :
"O Virgil, Virgil, who may this one be?"
She exclaimed angrily ; and he approached,
His eyes entirely on that good one fixed :
She seized the other, laid her bare in front
Tearing her drapery, and her body showed :
This woke me with the stench that came from it.

I threw mine eyes round ; and good Virgil "Three
Calls have I given," said ; "arise and come ;
Let us the opening for entrance find."
I rose : and were already brimming all
The circles of the blest mount with high day,
And we, the new sun on our backs, went on.
Following after him, I bore my brow
Like one that has it overpressed with care,
And makes himself a bridge's middle arch ;
When I heard : "Come, by this way do ye pass ;"
Pronounced in manner so benign and sweet,
As is not in this mortal region heard.
With open wings, in semblance of a swan's,
He who had spoken led us upwardly,
Between the two walls of the solid rock.
He moved his pinions then, and fanned the air,
"Blessed are they that mourn," the while he said,
"They shall have consolation for their souls."

"What hast, that still thou lookest on the ground?"
 My leader thus to say to me began,
 Short space preceded by the Angel both.
 Then I: "With thus much pondering makes me go
 A novel vision, holding me engrossed,
 So that from thought of it I cannot break."
 "Hast thou seen," said he, "that old sorceress,
 The sole cause of the weeping round us here?
 Hast thou seen how a man from her gets free?
 Make haste, and strike upon the ground thy feet;
 Keep thine eyes bent upon the lure, which whirls
 The eternal Monarch in his mighty spheres."
 Like as a falcon, that first views its claws,
 Next to the call turns, and then darts away
 To seek the banquet which attracts it there;
 Such was I then, and so when sunder cleft
 The rock to give a way for the ascent,
 I went to where the circle has its place.

Soon as upon the fifth round I came out,
 In it a weeping people I beheld,
 Lying upon the ground all downwards turned.
 "*Adhæsit pavimento anima mea*"²

I heard them say in sighings drawn so deep,
 That hardly were the words to be made out.
 "Chosen of God, O ye whose sufferings
 Justice and hope both render less severe,
 Direct us onwards to the upper heights."
 "If from this prostrate state ye come exempt,
 And wish to take the way that is most quick,
 Ever your right hands keep to the outside."
 Thus asked the Poet, and an answer thus
 Was made soon after to us; wherefore I
 Of that concealed one by his speech was ware;

² "My soul cleaveth to the dust," Psalm cxix. 25.

And I mine eyes turned to my Master's eyes ;
 And he accorded with a welcome sign
 What had besought of him my longing glance.
 When I was able thus to do my will,
 I moved myself that creature to be over,
 Whose words had made me notice him at first,
 Saying : " O Spirit, in whom tears mature
 That without which thou canst not turn to God,
 Put by awhile for me thy greater pains.
 Who wast thou, and why turned thou hast thy back
 Upwards, say, and if thou wouldst have me beg
 Something for thee there, whence I living came."

Then he to me : " For wherefore doth our backs
 Heaven to itself turn, thou shalt know ; but first
*Scias quod ego fui successor Petri.*³

Between Chiaveri and Siestri falls
 A river beautiful, and from its name
 The title of my race takes origin.

For one month and some few days I proved how
 Weighs the grand cope on him who mire avoids,
 So that all other loads but feathers seem.

Alas ! retarded my conversion was ;
 But when the Roman pastor I became,
 Then I discovered how false was my life.

I found that in it knew the heart no rest,
 Nor in such life was any further rise ;
 Wherefore the love of this life grew in me.

Until this time, a sad and separate
 Soul from God was I, covetous of all ;
 Now as thou seest, I am punished here.
 The effect of avarice is here displayed,

³ " Know that I was successor to St. Peter." Ottobuono, of the family of the Fieschi, Counts of Lavagno (a river in the Genoese territory between Chiaveri and Siestri), was Pope as Adrian 5th in 1276, from 11th July to 16th August, when he died.

In the purgation of converted souls ;
 Nor has the mountain bitterer punishment.
 E'en as our eyes did not exalt themselves
 On high, engaged upon the things of earth,
 So justice here has sunk them to the ground. 130
 As avarice extinguished for all good
 Our love, whence was our labour thrown away,
 So justice here confines us in restraint
 Fast bound and fettered by the hands and feet ;
 And such time as the righteous Lord may will,
 So long shall we lie stretched and motionless."

I had knelt down, and was about to speak ;
 But in commencing he was made aware,
 By the sound only, of my reverence :
 " For what cause," said he, " dost thou lowly bend ?" 130
 And I to him : " By reason of thy rank,
 To this my conscience prompted in due course."
 " Brother, unbend the knee, and raise thee up,"
 He answered : " Err not : I am fellow servant ;
 With thee and others to one Power alone.
 If thou those sacred evangelic words,
 Which say, ' They marry not,'⁴ hast ever heard,
 Thou mayst discover why I thus discourse.
 Pass onwards now ; I would not have thee stay ;
 For thy remaining interrupts the tears 140
 With which I ripen that which thou hast named.
 I have a niece on earth, Alagia⁵ called,
 Good in herself, unless our family
 Should render her by its example bad ;
 She only now remains to me on earth."

⁴ Rev. xix. 10.

⁵ Matthew, xxii. 30. All earthly relations are here at an end.

⁶ Alagia was the wife of Dante's friend Morcello Malaspina. Purg. viii. 118.



CANTO XX.

EXAMPLES OF POVERTY AND GENEROSITY.—HUGH CAPET.—EX-
AMPLES OF AVARICE.—THE TREMBLING OF THE MOUNTAIN.

AGAINST a better will the will scarce fights ;
Wherefore against my own wish, him to please,
I from the water drew my sponge not filled.
Onwards I moved ; and my guide went along

The space left vacant underneath the rock,
 As on a wall one skirts the battlements ;
 Because the people who pour drop by drop
 From eyes the ill which occupies the world,
 Too closely to the outer side approached.

Accurséd be thou, O thou ancient Wolf,¹ 10
 That more than all the other beasts dost prey,
 In thine insatiate hunger without end.
 O Heaven, by whose rolling some believe
 The circumstances of the earth are changed,
 When will he come, before whom she will fly ?
 With paces few and slow along we went,
 I listening to the shadows, whom I heard
 Lamenting and bewailing piteously ;
 And then I heard by hazard : " O sweet Mary,"
 Exclaimed in front of us with such a cry 20
 As in her travailing a woman gives ;
 And following after this : " Thou wast so meek,
 As in that hostelry might have been seen,
 Where thou thy sacred burden didst lay down." 3
 Following on this, I heard : " O good Fabricius,³
 Thou too with poverty didst virtue choose,
 Rather than have enormous wealth with vice."
 These words to me were so agreeable,
 That I went forwards for discovery
 Of that soul from whom they appeared to come. 30
 Further, it told the liberality
 Which Nicholas⁴ unto the maidens showed,
 In honourableness to keep their youth.

" O Soul, that hast so much thus well discoursed,
 Say, who thou wast," I said, " and why alone

¹ As in *In.* i. 29.

² *Luke*, ii. 7.

³ *Caius Fabricius*, the incorruptible conqueror of *Pyrrhus*.

⁴ According to the legend of *St. Nicholas* he gave dowries to three damsels whose virtue was exposed to temptation by their father's poverty.

Thou dost renew these praises well deserved?
 Without its thanks thy speech will not remain
 If I return to run the scanty course
 Of that life which to its conclusion speeds."⁴
 And he: "I will inform thee, not for good
 Which I expect on earth, but for that such
 Grace shines within thee before thou art dead.
 I⁵ was the root of that accurséd tree,
 Which in its shade keeps all the Christian world,
 So that good fruit is rarely plucked from it.
 If only Douay, Bruges, Lille and Ghent
 Were able, soon would vengeance be for it;⁶
 And this I pray of Him who judges all.
 Hugh Capet was I called upon the earth;
 From me the Louises and Philips sprang,
 By whom in recent times has France been ruled:
 A butcher's son of Paris' I was once;
 What time extinguished were the ancient kings,
 (All except one that had put on grey robes,⁷)
 I found myself, the reins placed in my hands
 For governing the kingdom, with such force
 Of new acquirement, and so rich in friends,
 That to the vacant diadem advanced
 The head was of my son, from out of whom
 Began the consecrated bones of these.
 So long as the great dower of Provence⁸

⁴ Hugh Capet, the founder of the French Monarchy, and ancestor of Philip the Fair who is the "accurséd tree."

⁶ Flanders was taken by Philip the Fair in 1299; but the French were expelled after the sanguinary battle of Courtrai in 1302, here predicted.

⁷ In Dante's time it was believed that the father of Hugh Capet had been a wealthy citizen of Paris, belonging to a family of the butchers' guild, and that he married the heiress of the Duke of Orleans.—G. Villani, iv. 4.

⁸ It is probable that the terminations of the Merovingian and Carlovingian dynasties are here confounded; and that the person indicated is Childeric 3rd, the last of the former race, who was deposed and became a monk in 752.

⁹ The territory of Raymond Beranger, Count of Provence, passed into

Had not destroyed shame in my family,
 It had small power, but only did not ill.
 Then it began by fraud and violence
 Its plundering; and after for amends,
 Took Normandy, Ponthieu, and Gascony.¹
 Charles² came to Italy, and for amends,
 A victim made of Conradin and then
 To heaven sent back St. Thomas, for amends.
 I see a time, and not long after this, 70
 Which brings another Charles³ from out of France,
 Him and his race the better to make known.
 He comes without arms, only with the spear
 That Judas tilted with, and this he wields
 So that from Florence he the vitals tears.
 From thence not land, but sin and ignominy
 He will obtain, the graver in itself
 The lighter such offence is counted of.
 The other⁴ late come forth, in his ship taken,
 I see his daughter selling, bargaining 80
 As do the corsairs with the rest of slaves.
 O Avarice, what canst thou more achieve,

the royal family of France by the marriage of Charles of Anjou with his daughter and heiress Beatrice in 1245.

¹ Normandy was ceded to St. Louis by Henry 3rd of England in 1260. —Gascony was taken by an artifice from Edward 1st by Philip the Fair in 1294.—The mention of Ponthieu (or Poitou ?) cannot well be explained; and perhaps it is unreasonable to expect that the whole of Dante's invective can be accommodated to the facts of history.

² Charles of Anjou, who secured his title to the crown of Naples and Sicily under the Pope's grant, by the cruel execution of Conradin, the grandson and last heir of Frederick 2nd, in 1268.—He was said to have poisoned Thomas Aquinas, who died when on his journey from Naples to attend the Council of Lyons in 1274.

³ Charles of Valois, who was invited to Italy by Boniface 8th in 1301; and by treachery obtained possession of Florence, and drove the Whites from it into banishment. He was called "Senza terra," or "Lack-land," to which allusion is made in v. 76.

⁴ Charles 2nd of Naples, son of Charles of Anjou, left France to recover Sicily (after the Sicilian Vespers) and was taken prisoner in an engagement with the ships of Pedro of Arragon in 1284. He married his daughter to an old man—one of the Estes—for a large sum of money.

Since thou hast drawn to thee my family,
 So that it loves not its own proper flesh ?
 Lest future wrong with wrong erst done should match,
 I see the lily entering Alagna,⁵
 And in his vicar, Christ a prisoner.
 I see him being mocked a second time ;
 I see renewed the vinegar and gall,
 And himself slain between the living thieves.
 I see a novel Pilate so enraged
 That this suffices not, but without law
 He sets his greedy sails toward the Temple.⁶
 O my Lord, when shall I be gratified
 By looking on thy vengeance, which concealed
 In thy deep secret, makes thine anger sweet ?

“That which I said of her, the only Spouse⁷
 Of the Holy Spirit, and which has made thee
 For some elucidation to me turn,
 Is thus arranged for all our orisons,
 While the day lasts ; but when the night succeeds,
 In place of this we sing a different lay.
 Then we commemorate Pygmalion,⁸
 Whom traitor, robber, and a parricide
 His avaricious longing for gold made :
 And the distresses of the miser Midas,
 That followed on his covetous request,
 For which he ever will be ridiculed.
 Of foolish Achan⁹ every one records,
 How he the plunder took, so that the wrath

⁵ The seizure of Boniface 8th at Alagna (now Anagni) by Sciarra Colonna, and Nogaret the French envoy, by order of Philip the Fair, in 1303.

⁶ The persecution of the Templars, and confiscation of their estates in 1307.

⁷ The Virgin Mary. See v. 19.

⁸ King of Tyre, the brother of Dido.

⁹ Who secreted part of the spoil of Jericho, Joshua vii.

Of Joshua seems to fasten on him yet.
 Accuse we then Sapphira and her husband;
 We praise the kicks which Heliodorus¹ felt;
 And circles all the mount in infamy
 Polymnestor² that Polydorus slew;
 And finally is thus exclaimed: 'O Crassus'
 Tell, for thou knowest, of what taste is gold?'
 Discourse we thus, one high, another low,
 According as the wish that prompts to speak,
 Or to a greater or a less refers: 120
 And in the good which here is told by day,
 I was not solitary, but close by
 No other person did exalt the voice."

We had already from this one broke off,
 And we were struggling to surmount the way
 As much as was permitted to our means,
 When I felt as it were a thing that fell,
 The mountain trembling; seized me then a chill,
 Like that which takes a man about to die.
 Truly so violently quaked not Delos, 120
 Before Latona in it spread her couch
 To give nativity to heaven's twin eyes.³
 Then there arose on every side a cry
 Such, that the Master to me drew himself,
 Saying: "Have fear of nothing whilst I guide."
 "*Gloria in excelsis Deo*"⁴ all
 Exclaimed, by what I gathered from those near,
 From whom the cry was able to be heard.
 There we remained immoveable and struck,

¹ Sent to plunder the treasury of the temple at Jerusalem, 2 Maccabees, iii. 25.

² King of Thrace, who murdered his brother-in-law Polydorus to obtain the treasures of Priam.

³ Down whose throat molten gold was poured.

⁴ Apollo and Diana.

⁵ Glory to God on high. Luke, ii. 14.

Like to the shepherds who first heard that song, 140
Until the trembling ceased, and was fulfilled.
Then we resumed again our holy way,
Viewing the shadows lying on the ground,
Turned downward, with their usual laments.
No ignorance with such anxiety
Has rendered me desirous to be taught,
Unless my memory in this matter errs,
As in my mind I seemed to harbour then ;
Neither, for his speed, did I dare to ask,
Nor of myself could I the thing resolve : 150
And thus I went in terror and in doubt.

CANTO XXI.

STATIUS.—THE QUALITY OF THE MOUNTAIN.—HOW THE SOULS
LEAVE IT.—VIRGIL IS DISCOVERED TO STATIUS.

THE natural thirst which is not satisfied
But from that well whence the Samaritan¹
Woman entreated should be given her,
Upon me wrought, and quickened me to speed
Along the encumbered path behind my guide,
And I wept over that just punishment.
When lo ! in manner as relates St. Luke²
That Christ appeared to two, upon their way,
After he came forth from the sepulchre,
There now appeared a shade ; and followed us,
Looking down on the throng that lay around ;
Nor were we ware of him before he spoke.
Saying : " My brothers, may God give you peace ! "
We on the instant turned us round, and Virgil
Gave him such salutation as was meet,
And then began : " With blessed purposing
May in peace stablish thee the Court of Truth,
Which in eternal exile fixes me."
" How," said he, and meantime we swift advanced,
" If ye are shades whom God calls not above,
Who on his blest stair has you thus far led ? "

¹ John. iv. 13.

² Luke, xxiv. 13.

My teacher then : " If thou observe the marks
Which this man bears, and which the angel prints,
Thou mayst be sure he with the good will reign.
But because she,³ that spins by day and night,
Has not for him the distaff yet wound off,
(Which Clotho furnishes and fills for all,)
His soul which sister is to mine and thine,
Ascending upwards could not go alone,
Because it cannot in our fashion see :
Wherefore was I drawn from the ample throat
Of Hell to be his guide, and I will lead
Onwards as far as may my teaching go.
But tell me, if thou knowest, why such throes
The mountain just gave, and at once why all
Down to its watery base were heard to cry ? "
This question so fell in the very nick
Of my desire, that with the hope alone
My thirst began to be less violent.

'Then he : " This is a thing which not without⁴⁰
Ordainment is among the observances
Of the mount, nor is it unusual.
The place is here from all mutations free ;
By what Heaven from it to itself receives
Only can such be, and by no cause else.⁴
Wherefore no showers of rain, or hail, or snow,
Nor dew, nor hoar-frost higher up do fall,
Than is the stairway of the three short steps.
No clouds are seen, or dense or rarefied,
Nor coruscations, neither Thaumas' daughter,⁵⁰
Who upon earth so often changes place.

³ Lachesis, one of the Fates, who spun the thread of life from the distaff held by Clotho.

⁴ The only movement is when a purified soul is about to leave the mountain to be received into heaven.

⁵ Iris (the rainbow) was the daughter of Thaumas.

Dry vapour higher up does not ascend
Than to the top of the three steps I named,
Where sets his feet the Vicar of St. Peter.
Haply below some trembling may occur ;
But from the wind that underground is hid,
I know not why, above it never quakes.
It trembles what time spotless any soul
Perceives itself, and rises, or prepares
Upwards to fly, and such a cry assists. 63
Of its pure state the will alone makes proof,
Which with full liberty to change its place
Snatches the soul up, and with will sustains it.
From first it wills good ; but desire prevents,
Which divine justice by the selfsame bent,
That led to sinning, fastens now to pain.
And I that in this punishment have lain
Five hundred years and more, now only feel
Free aspiration for a better place.
Therefore you felt the trembling, and the good 70
Spirits throughout the mountain render praise
To the Lord that he soon may raise them up."

Thus spoke he : and as one is wont to joy
In drinking more, the greater is the thirst,
Words fail me to describe how I rejoiced.
Said the wise leader : " Now I see the net
That here encloses, and how one escapes ;
Whence is this trembling ; and why ye rejoice.
Now, who thou wast be pleased that I should know,
And why prostrate so many centuries 80
Here thou hast been, inform me by thy words."

" What time the virtuous Titus with the aid
Of the great King, took vengeance for the wound
Whence flowed the blood that was by Judas sold :
With that name which most honours and endures,

On earth I dwelt," that spirit answer made,
 "In fame abundant yet not of the faith.
 So sweet in me the genius was of song,
 That, a Tolosan, to her drew me Rome,
 Where I achieved a brow with myrtle crowned. ¹⁰
 The men on earth yet name me Statius ;⁶
 I sang of Thebes, then of the great Achilles,
 But with my second load fell by the way.
 Were of my fire the origin the sparks
 Whence I was kindled from the flame divine,
 From which so many thousands draw their light :
 I mean the *Æneid*, that was my breast,
 And was my nurse-mother in poesy :
 Without this nothing I should have been worth ;
 And to have lived upon the earth what time ¹⁰⁰
 Virgil lived there, I would postpone a year
 Beyond my right, my going forth of exile."

These words made Virgil turn himself to me,
 With aspect that in silence said : Be silent ;
 But the will cannot all desires fulfil,
 For smiles and tears too naturally wait
 Upon the passions whence they take their rise,
 And in the truest least obey the will.
 I only smiled, like one that gives a sign,
 On which the shade ceased, and threw his regards ¹¹⁰
 Into mine eyes, where thoughts do chiefly dwell :
 And, "As thy labour may be crowned with good,"
 He said, "tell why just now thy countenance
 Displayed to me the lightning of a smile ?"
 Now was I hemmed in upon either side ;

⁶ Statius, the Roman poet, flourished at the time of the taking of Jerusalem by Titus. He was a native of Naples, but is here confounded, by a common error of the time, with a rhetorician of the same name of Tolosa or Toulouse. Statius completed his *Thebais*, but died after having written only two books of his *Achilles*.

One made me silent, and the other begged
Speech : on which sighing I am understood.

"Speak," said the Master, "and be not afraid
Of speaking ; but say on, and to him tell
What with so much anxiety he asks."

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Then I : "Perchance thou art in wonderment,
O ancient spirit, at the smile I gave ;
Yet would I have thee feel more wonderment.

This one, who leads mine eyes up to the height,
Is that same Virgil, from whom thou hast gained
To sing so well of men and of the Gods.

.

If thou hadst any other reason for my smile

Abandon it as false, and this adopt,—

The words which thou concerning him hast said."

On this he stooped down to embrace the feet

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Of my instructor, but he said : "O Brother,

Do not so ; thou a shadow, seest a shade."

The other rising said : "Thou mayst the sum

Judge of the love which in me burns for thee,

When I forget that we are empty forms,

And treat a shade as a substantial thing."

CANTO XXII.

THE SIXTH CIRCLE.—STATIUS CONTINUED.—THE GLUTTONOUS.—
THE FRUIT TREE.—EXAMPLES OF TEMPERANCE.

BEHIND us now we had the Angel left,
The Angel who had led to the sixth round,
After removing from my brow one mark ;
And they who had to justice turned their will,
Had cried out with their voices "*Blessed they
Which thirst*"¹ with no addition saying this ;
And I more light than at the other gates,
So went along that without any toil
Upwards I followed after those swift souls.

Virgil began to speak then, saying : " Love 10
Aroused by virtue ever kindles love,
If only outwardly its flame appear.
Whence since the time when down among us came
To the infernal Limbo Juvenal,²
Who made well known to me thy love for me,
My kindly feeling towards thee was such
As never wrought in me for one unseen ;
So that these stairs will now seem to be short.

¹ "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Matthew, v. 6.

² Statius is mentioned by Juvenal, Sat. vii. 82.

But tell me, and forgive me as a friend,
 If in security I loose the rein,
 And henceforth as a friend converse with me :
 Within thy breast in what manner could find
 A lodgement avarice, with so much knowledge,
 As thou wast filled with by thy diligence ?”

These sentences made Statius incline
 To smile at first ; but afterwards he answered :
 “ All thy discourse is a prized mark of love.
 In verity things oftentimes appear,
 Affording false materials for doubt,
 Because the real causes are concealed.
 Thy question proves to me that thy belief
 Is, that I was a miser in the life,
 Haply because I in that circle was.
 Now be informed that avarice was set
 Too far from me ; and this extravagance
 Unnumbered months in punishment have held.
 And had it not been that I ruled my thoughts,
 What time I read that passage where thou criest
 To human nature, like a man in anger ;
 ‘ Whither canst thou not drive, accursed thirst
 Of gold, the appetites of mortal men ?’³
 Circling, I should have felt the woful jousts.
 Then I found out that a too open flight
 The hands might take in spending, and I rued
 As well for this as for my other sins :
 How many with shorn hairs will rise again,
 From ignorance, which for this kind of sin
 Repentance barred in life, and to the last.
 And know thou that the vice which corresponds
 To any sin, its natural opposite,
 Together with it here exhales its sap.

³ *Æneid*, iii. 57.

⁴ In the circle of the Avaricious and Prodigal in Hell. In. vii. 22.

Wherefore if I am placed among this race
Who bewail avarice, for my purgation,
Thus has it fallen me for its reverse."

"What time thou of the cruel wars didst sing,
Of the two sources⁶ of Jocasta's grief,"
Replied the Bard of the bucolic lays,
"By that which Clio⁷ there with thee discourses,
It seems that not as yet had made thee true
The Faith, without which good works do not stand."⁸
If this be so, what sun or source of light
Did so thy darkness break, that thou didst set
Thy sails to follow towards the Fisherman?"
He then to him: "Thou didst me first invite
Towards Parnassus in its caves to drink,
And first didst light me on the way to God.
Thou wast as one that as he walks by night,
Carries a torch behind, that helps him not,
But gives them knowledge that come after him,
When thou didst say: 'The ages recommence,
Justice returns, and the prime time of men,
And a new progeny from Heaven descends.'⁹
Through thee a Bard was I, through thee a Christian;
But that thou mayst the better view my sketch,
I will extend my hand to colour it.
The world was teeming then in all its breadth
With the true Faith, that had been sown abroad
By the eternal kingdom's messengers;
And thy words which above I touched upon,
Accorded so well with the novel preachers,
That to frequent them it became my wont.
So holy afterwards to me they seemed,

⁶ Eteocles and Polynices.

⁷ Who is invoked by Statius at the beginning of the Thebaid.

⁸ Virg. Ecl. iv. 5. A passage which has been applied as a prophecy of the coming of Christ.

That when Domitian persecuted them,
 Their woes were not without my sympathy.
 And while I had my residence on earth,
 I aided them, and their upright demeanour
 Made me condemn for them all other sects :
 And ere I had the Greeks led to the streams
 Of Thebes in poetry, I had been baptized,
 But I in fear a hidden Christian stayed,
 Professing for a long time paganism ;
 And this lukewarmness the fourth circling round
 Made me pursue for more than centuries four.
 Do thou now, that hast lifted up the veil
 Which covered me, as I have fully told,
 Since we have leisure upon the ascent,
 Tell me where Terence our ancient is,
 Cæcilius, Plautus, Varro, if thou knowest ?
 If they are damned say, and in what abode."

"These, I, and Persius, and many others,"
 My leader answer made, "are with that Greek *
 Whom nursed the Muses more than all the rest,
 In the first circle of the prison dark.
 Often we hold discourses of the Mount,⁹
 That ever on it holds our fosterers.
 There is Euripides and Antiphon,
 Simonides and Agathon, and more
 Greeks who have had their temples decked with bays.
 Here of thy personages ¹ may be seen
 Antigone, Deiphile, Argia,
 Ismene, too, as tearful as in life :
 Thou mightest her ² see who Langia showed ;
 The daughter of Tiresias, and Thetis,
 Deodamia with her sister too."

* Homer. ⁹ Olympus. ¹ In the Thebais and Achilleis.

² Hypsipyle, who conducted the Argive army when perishing with
 †him† to the river Langia. Thebais, iv. 716.

The poets now were silent both of them,
Again intent in casting looks around,
Free from the ascent and its confining walls.
And now the four attendants of the day³
Were left, and at the chariot-beam the fifth,
Upwards directing still its glowing point ; 170
When said my guide : " Methinks to the outside
Still we should keep the right hand shoulder turned,
Circling the mountain, as has been our wont."
Thus did our habit then become our guide ;
And with less doubt we entered on the way,
With the approval of that noble soul.
They went in front of me, and I alone
Behind, and listened to what they discoursed,
Which gave me intellect for poetry.

This pleasant converse interrupted soon 180
A tree, which in the middle path we found
With fruit of odour excellent and sweet.
And as a fir-tree upwards loses girth
From bough to bough, so did this downwardly ;
I think in order that no one might climb.
Upon the side on which our path was closed,
A limpid water fell from the tall rock,
Over the leaves itself distributing.

The poets twain drew near unto the tree ;
When from among the foliage a voice 140
Cried out : " Beware how ye approach this food."
Then it said : " Mary⁴ did bestow more thought
To make the marriage honoured and complete,
Than on her palate—she that prays for you :
And the old Roman women for their drink

³ It is five hours since sunrise, or 11 A.M.

⁴ At the marriage in Cana : " *They have no wine.*" John, ii. 3.

With water were content,^a and Daniel
Feasting despised, and cultivated wisdom.^c
The first age was as beautiful as gold ;
With hunger acorns were made savoury,
And with thirst nectar made of every brook. 190
Honey and locusts were the nourishment
That fed the Baptist in the wilderness :
From this is he so glorious, and so great,
As in the Gospels is of him set forth."

^a Valerius Maximus, ii. 1.

^c Daniel, i. 12.



CANTO XXIII.

THE SIXTH CIRCLE CONTINUED.—FORESE

WHILE I mine eyes on the green foliage
Was keeping fixed, as one is wont to do
That wastes his time in following a bird,
My more than father said to me: "My son,
Come onwards, for the time allotted us
Demands to be more usefully employed."
My looks I turned, and not less swift my feet
Towards the Sages, who such converse held,
As made my progress be without fatigue.
When lo! a weeping and a song was heard:
"*Open my lips, O Lord,*"¹ in such a wise,
As brought forth in me joy and sorrowing.
"O my sweet father, what is this I hear?"

¹ Psalm li. 15.

Began I; and he: "These are shades that go
Haply to loose the fetters of their debts."

As pilgrims do when they are rapt in thought,
Who unknown people on their way o'ertaking,
Look round on them, but do not stay their steps;
Behind us so at a more rapid pace
Coming and passing us, I noted here 20
A crowd of spirits silent and devout.
Sunken and dark had each of them his eyes,
With pallid face and so emaciated,
That from the bones the skin its outline took.
I think that at his latest gasp not thus
Reduced to meagreness was Erisichthon²
By hunger, when he had no further help.
Behold—in inward thought I might have said—
The people who did lose Jerusalem
When Mary³ fastened on her child her mouth. 30
A ring without its gem their orbits seemed:
They who in man's face can read *o, m, o,*
Might here have easily discerned the *m*.⁴

Who would have thought the odour of a fruit
Could have such influence to create desire,
Or of a water, if he knew not how?
I was in wonder at what starved them thus,
(The reason not yet being manifest
Of their emaciation and lean skin)
When lo! from the recesses of his head, 40
On me his eyes a shade turned with fixed gaze;
Loudly then cried: "What grace for me is this?"

² Punished by Ceres with continual hunger. Ovid, *Met.* viii. 785.

³ The unhappy woman who ate her own son in the famine at the siege of Jerusalem. Josephus vii. 21.

⁴ The *o's* are the two eyes; the *m* is formed by the nose and eyebrows: and *omo* or *homo* (man) is spelt.

I should not have recalled him by his face ;
 But by his voice there was disclosed to me
 That which his countenance had kept concealed.
 This spark rekindled to activity
 My recognition of his altered looks,
 And I once more Forese's¹ visage saw.
 "Give no attention to the arid scurf,"
 He prayed of me, "that blemishes my skin,
 Nor to the lack of flesh that I display ;
 But of thyself tell true, and who are these
 Two spirits who for thee an escort form :
 Let it not be, that thou wilt not discourse."

"Thy countenance, which I have mourned as dead,
 Gives me not less occasion for regret,"
 Answered I, "when I see it thus transformed.
 Tell me in God's name what has stripped thee thus ;
 Urge not my speech while I am marvelling,
 Ill can he speak whom other wants engross."
 He then to me : "By the Eternal Will
 A power dwells in the water and the tree
 Behind us now left, under which I pine.
 All of this race who with lamenting sing,
 For seeking the mouth's pleasure in excess,
 In thirst and hunger here regain their health.
 Provokes the appetite to eat and drink
 The odour of the apples and the spray
 Which is diffused among the foliage ;
 And every time that we this rocky path
 Encircle, is our punishment renewed :
 I said our punishment, I mean our joy ;
 For the same impulse² to the tree leads us,
 Which led on Christ rejoicing to say, *Eli,*

¹ Brother of Corso Donati, and Dante's early friend and companion.

² That is, the will to undergo suffering. Matthew xxvii. 46.

What time with his own blood he set us free.”
I then to him : “ Forese, from the day,
When for the better life the world thou changedst,
Down to this time, five years have not elapsed :
If in thee ceased the possibility
Further of sinning, ere the season came 80
Of gracious sorrow that re-weds to God,
Arrived thus high, how art thou ? for as yet
I should have thought to find thee still below,
Where gradually is restoration worked.”
Then he to me : “ Thus swiftly has me led
To drink of the sweet wormwood of this pain,
My Nella by her never-ceasing prayers.
By pious orisons and by her sighs
She has withdrawn me from the tarrying shore,
And has released me from the other rounds. 90
As much in God’s sight is esteemed and dear
My widow, whom I tenderly beloved,
As she is singular in doing well :
Truly Barbagia’ in Sardinia
Among its women has more modesty,
Than the Barbagia where her I left.
O brother dear, what wouldst thou have me tell ?
A future time is now within my view,
To which the present will not ancient seem, 100
When from the pulpit will forbidden be
The dames of Florence, in unblushingness
From going forth with bosoms unconcealed.
Were e’er Barbarians or Saracens
To whom was needful, clothing to enforce,
Or spiritual or other discipline ?
But if these shameless ones could be assured
Of what swift heaven has for them in store,
They now would open wide their mouths to howl.

² A rude district in Sardinia, noted for the immodest dress of its women.

For if my prescience here deceives me not,
They will be sad before the cheeks bear down
Of him that now is hushed with lullabies.
And now, my brother, nothing from me hide ;
Thou seest that not I only, but this crowd
Are all in wonder why the sun is veiled.”^a

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Then I to him : “ If thou dost recollect
What thou with me wast, and what I with thee,
The present story will be sorrowful.
From out of that life he delivered me
Who goes before me, some nights since, when round
Displayed herself the sister there of him,
(And to the sun I turned). He through the deep
Night of the truly dead my guide has been,
With this true flesh that has accompanied.
Thence his assistance upwards has me led,
Ascending and encircling the mountain,
That makes you straight whom crooked made the world.
So far his company he promises,
As to the place where Beatrice shall be :
Thenceforward I without him must remain.
Virgil it is who has informed me thus,
(And him I point to) ; the other is the shade
For whom just agitated all its slopes
Your kingdom, his departure giving him.”

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^a By Dante's body, intercepting the light.

CANTO XXIV.

THE SIXTH CIRCLE CONTINUED.—DEATH OF CORSO DONATI.—
ANOTHER TREE.—EXAMPLES OF INTEMPERANCE.—ASCENT
TO THE SEVENTH CIRCLE

NEITHER our march our speech, nor that our march
Slackened, but we in converse swiftly went,
Like to a vessel urged by a fair wind ;
And the souls seeming like to things twice dead,
Through their eyes' caverns did astonishment
Draw in at me, when of my life aware :
And I continuing further my discourse,
Said : " Haply he ' more tardily ascends
Than he would do, for others' company.
But tell me, if thou know'st, where is Piccarda ; 10
And say if I see any worthy note
Among the people who thus gaze on me."

" My sister, that as beautiful or good
I know not should rank most, triumphant sits
Already on Olympus in her crown."¹
Thus spoke he, adding : " Here is not forbid
To call by name, because are thus effaced
Our outward features by this regimen.
This is Buonagiunta² (showing him),

¹ Statius.

² Ps. iii. 49.

³ Of the Orbisani family ; a poet of Lucca.

Lucca's Buonagiunta : and that face
 Beyond him, more emaciate than the rest,
 In his embrace once held the holy Church ;
 Of Tours was he,⁴ and expiates in this fast
 Bolsena's eels in the Vernaccia wine."
 He named me many others one by one,
 And to be named they all appeared well pleased,
 So that among them no dislike I marked.
 Champing his teeth in hunger I observed
 Ubaldin dalla Pila,⁵ and Boniface,"
 Who with his crosier tended many souls.
 I saw Marchese,⁶ that had opportunity
 To drink at Forli, with less urgent thirst,
 Yet never felt that he was satisfied ;
 But like to one that looks, and then prefers
 One to another, I did to him of Lucca,
 Who most seemed of me to take cognizance.
 He murmured then, and of Gentucca⁷ something
 From that place heard I, where he felt the sting
 Of justice, which on this wise tortured him.
 "O Spirit," said I, "that so eager seemest
 To parley with me, suffer me to hear,
 And by thy speech make each of us content."
 "A maid is born that wears not yet the veil,"
 Began he, "who to thee will pleasing make
 My city, although in it men find fault.
 Depart now with this piece of prophecy :
 If by my murmuring thou hast been deceived,
 The true events hereafter will disclose.
 But if I now behold him, tell me, who

⁴ Martin 4th (of Tours) : pope in 1281, died 1285.

⁵ Brother of the Cardinal Ubaldini, *In. x.* 120.

⁶ Archbishop of Ravenna.

⁷ Of the Bigogliesi family, a gentleman of Forli. On his butler telling him that people said he was always drinking ; he said, "Tell them I am always thirsty."

⁸ This would seem to be the name of a lady of Lucca, with whom Dante was to become acquainted.

Produced the verses rare, which thus commence: 59

'Ladies that own the faculty to love.''''

Then I to him: "I do confess that when
Love breathes in me, I mark, and to what strain
He dictates inwards I give utterance."

"O brother," said he, "now I see the cords
That held myself, the Notary, and Guittone,¹
Back from the dulcet new style which I hear.

Well can I understand now that your pens"

On him exactly follow who dictates,

Which certainly with ours did not befall; 60

And he that to go further should attempt,

Knows not the difference between the styles: "

Then as if satisfied he held his peace.

Like as the birds that winter towards the Nile,

Now in battalions spread themselves abroad,

And now fly closely and advance in file;

So all the spirits that were in that place,

Wheeling their front did hasten on their steps,

Swift by their wish and their attenuate forms:

And as a man that is in running spent, 61

Lets his companions pass, and loiters on,

Until the panting of his breast is eased;

So let beyond him shoot the holy throng

Forese, and with me came after them,

Saying: "When shall I look on thee again?"

I said: "I know not how long is my life,

But my returning cannot be so swift,

As that I shall not sooner wish this shore,

Because the place where I was fixed to live,

4. 62

¹ The first line of one of the canzonets in the Vita Nuova.

² Iacopo da Lentino, an early Italian poet and notary, lived at the end of the 13th century. Guittone d' Arezzo, said to have invented the Italian sonnet, died 1294.

³ The younger poets.

From day to day is more deprived of good,
And for a sad destruction seems prepared.”
“Now go,” he said, “for him⁸ that has most guilt,
Behind a horse’s tail I can see dragged
Towards the abyss where is no expiation.
The horse at every bound more swiftly goes,
Ever increasing, till he stamps on him,
And in vile sort disfigured leaves his corpse.
These spheres have not a long time to revolve,
(Raising his eyes to heaven) ere shall be clear
That which my words no farther may explain.
Remain thou now, for precious is the time
In this abode, and I too much consume,
Going on this wise, side by side with thee.”

As at a gallop sometimes issues forth
A horseman from a troop of cavalry,
To win the honour of the first encounter,
So from us he departed at quick pace;
And I stayed on the pathway with those two,
That were such mighty masters of the world.
And when so far in front of us he sped,
As that mine eyes no more could follow him
Than could my understanding his discourse,
The green and heavy-laden boughs appeared,
At no great distance, of another tree.
As soon as I had rounded towards its place,
Beneath I saw a race with hands uplift,
Crying I know not what towards the leaves;
As eager children use to do in vain,
Who beg, and answers not the person begged,

⁸ Corso Donati, who remained as the chief of the Black Guelfs in Florence, after their establishment by Charles of Valois. His power roused the jealousy of the people, and he was attacked in a sudden tumult. He fell from his horse in endeavouring to escape, and was dragged by the stirrup until he was overtaken and put to death. This happened in 1308.

But to increase the edge of their desire
Holds up the thing they want, and hides it not.
Then they departed as if undeceived ;
And we on this drew near to the great tree
That had so many tears and prayers refused.
" Pass onwards, nor a close approach attempt ;
The tree is higher up, of which Eve ate,
And this plant from it takes its origin."
Thus spoke, I know not who, among the boughs ;
Wherefore I, close to Statius and Virgil,
Went on upon that side where rose the cliff.
It said : " Remember those accurséd ones⁴
Formed of the clouds, that in their fill of wine
Combated Theseus with their double breasts ;
Think of the Hebrews that lay prone to drink.
For which as comrades Gideon chose them not,
When from the hills he fell on Midian."⁵

110
120

Thus closely skirting one of the two sides
Passed we, and heard the sins of gluttony,
Now followed by a painful recompence.
Coming out then upon the open way,
A thousand paces we advanced and more,
Gazing on all, without a word of speech.
" What are ye three that go alone in thought ? "
Sudden a voice said, and I gave a start
As would a terrified and coward steed.
My head I raised to see what this might be,
And in a furnace never have I seen
Metal or glass so ruddy and so bright,
As now I saw one saying : " If ye wish
Above to mount, by this way must ye turn ;
Hither come they that would attain to Peace."
His aspect had deprived me of my sight,

130
140⁴ The Centaurs.⁵ Judges, vii. 1.

And to my leaders I again returned,
Like to a man obeying what he hears ;
And like as when, precursor of the dawn
The air in May breathes, wafting odours forth
Impregnated from flowers and the fields ;
Such air felt I, that in the middle smote
My brow, and moving pinions could I feel,
That made ambrosia's scent perceptible ;
And I heard said : " How blessed they whom lights
Such grace, that the desires of the palate
Kindle not too great appetite in their breast,
But ever hunger they in just degree."

CANTO XXV.

THE SEVENTH CIRCLE.—THE CORPOREAL SHAPES OF THE SOULS
IN PURGATORY.—THE SINNERS IN LUXURY ARE PURGED IN
FIRE.—EXAMPLES OF CHASTITY.

Now was a time when the ascent craved haste,
For the meridian circle had the sun
To Taurus¹ left, to Scorpio middle night ;
Wherefore as does a man who does not stop,
But on his journey wends, whate'er appear,
If goaded by the stimulus of need ;
Thus entered we upon the narrow pass,
Following each other to ascend the stair
So strait that it disouples them that mount :
And like a young stork that expands the wing 10
In wish to fly, but cannot yet be bold
To leave the nest, and lets it droop again ;
'Thus was I in my kindled yet quenched wish
To make enquiry, to the act advancing
Of him that ready makes himself to speak.

Forbore not, for the swiftness of our march,
My sire beloved, but said to me : " Discharge
Thy bow of speech now drawn to the shaft-head."

¹ The sun being in Aries, and Taurus (to which Scorpio is opposite)
being on the meridian, it is 2 P.M.

In confidence I opened then my mouth,
And I began : "How can they be thus lean 20
Where there is no necessity for food ?"
"If thou wilt recollect how Meleäger²
Consumed with the consumption of the brand,"
He said, "this thing will not be difficult ;
And if thou thinkest how with every change,
Your image changes in the looking glass,
This, which appears hard, will be easy made.
But that thou mayst be pleased to thy content,
Behold here Statius, him I beg and pray
To be from hence physician to thy doubts." 30
"If the eternal sights to him I teach,"
Statius replied, "while thou art standing by,
That I could not deny thee, must excuse."

Beginning made he then : "If my discourse,
My son, thy mind considers and receives,
It will enlighten thee in what thou askest.
Blood that is perfected, and not absorbed³
By thirsty veins, and which remains behind,
Like food that from the table is removed, 40
In the heart takes for all the human limbs,
A virtue formative, like unto that,
Which to supply these travels through the veins.
Further digested it descends where best
In silence were passed o'er ; and thence distils
In nature's vessel to meet other blood :
Together there the one and other mix,
To suffer one, to act the other made,
By the perfecting spot⁴ from whence they flowed ;
And thus united, it begins to work,

² Ovid. Met. viii. 510.

³ What follows is in conformity with Thomas Aquinas, who follows Aristotle. Summa, i. 118 and 119.

⁴ The heart.

Coagulates at first, then vivifies 30
 What from its own material has gained form.
 The active virtue thus become a soul
 (Namely a plant's soul, thus much differing,
 That this in progress is, that at its end)
 So far effects, that now it moves and feels
 Like a sea-sponge; and then it undertakes
 To organise the powers as their germ.
 Next is dispersed, my son, and speeds throughout,
 The virtue gained in the male parent's heart,
 Where nature for the members all provides. 60
 But how from animal it human grows,
 As yet thou canst not know; this is a point
 Which led to error one⁶ more wise than thee,
 So far, that in his doctrine was disjoined
 The faculty of reason from the soul,
 Finding no organ set apart for it.
 Open thy breast to take this coming truth,
 And know that what time in the embryo
 The brain's organisation is complete, 70
 The first Creator turns to it with joy
 At such the skill of nature, and inspires
 A new born spirit with a power charged
 To draw what it encounters active there
 To its own substance, making it one soul
 Which lives and feels and on itself reflects.
 And that thou mayst less marvel at my words,
 Consider the sun's heat, how that makes wine
 Joined to the liquor from the vine that flows.

- "Whenever Lachesis has no more thread,
 The soul breaks from the flesh, and in effect 80
 The part divine and human bears with it:
 The other powers almost are extinct;

⁶ Averroës, the Arabian commentator on Aristotle.

But understanding, memory, and will,
In action are much keener than before.
Without delay, spontaneous it falls
In wondrous fashion upon either shore ;⁶
Then for the first time learns its destiny.
Soon as that place contains it in itself,
Forth radiates the virtue formative
So, and as much, as in the living limbs. 90
And as the air when full of watery clouds,
By the sun's rays that in it are reflected,
Is seen adorned by different bright hues ;
So in that place the neighbour air assumes
Whatever figure may suggest to it,
By such its power, the soul which still exists :
And from that time in manner of a flame
Following the fire in its every change,
Its new form on the spirit follows close.
From hence it therefore its appearance gains, 100
And is called shadow ; and its organs hence
Each has of sense, and even that of sight.
From hence we speak, from hence we also smile ;
From hence we draw the sighings and the tears
Which thou throughout the mount mayst have perceived.
According as the wishes stimulate,
Or other passions, so conforms the shade ;
This is the cause of what thou marvel'st at."

And now arrived at the last punishment
We were, and turned upon the right hand side, 110
And by new cares our thoughts were occupied.
Here from itself the bank forth darted flames ;
And from the terrace upwards blew a wind
Which drove them back, and from it kept them off.
Thus were we forced towards the open side

⁶ Either of Acheron ; or of the Tiber, to be transported to Purgatory.

Going one by one; and I the fire feared
 On one side, on the other feared to fall.
 My leader said to me: "Along this part
 A tight rein must thou keep upon the eyes,
 For easily thou mightst a false step make."

120

"*Summa Deus clementia*" in the heart
 Of that great fire I could hear them singing,
 Which made me more desirous to look round.
 Then I saw spirits passing through the flames;
 And I kept watch on them and on my feet,
 Alternately dividing my regards.
 At the conclusion of the hymn thus sung,
 Loudly they cried out: "*I know not a man*:"⁷
 Again then in low tones began that hymn.
 This done, anew they cried out: "In the woods
 Diana stayed, and drove away Calisto,"⁸
 When Venus' poison in her she had felt."
 Next they renewed their singing; and then wives
 And husbands they recited that were chaste,
 Under the laws of marriage and of virtue:
 And this mode as I think suffices them
 For all the time that scorches them the flame.
 In such employment, and in such behests
 The wound last given¹ must be healed again.

130

⁷ "O God of highest mercy." The first line of a hymn for purity, as it is found in the ancient Romish breviaries.

⁸ Luke i. 34.

⁹ Ovid. Met. ii. 465.

¹ The last of the P's marked by the Angel. Purg. ix. 112.

CANTO XXVI.

THE SEVENTH CIRCLE CONTINUED.—GUIDO GUINICELLI AND
ARNAUD DANIEL.

WHILE thus along the edge, each after each,
We were proceeding, oft the Master good
Said: "Take thou care; let profit thee my warning."
On the right shoulder smote me now the sun,
That with his rays already all the West
Had changed from its blue tincture to a white;
And in my shadow ruddier I made
Appear the flames; at which phenomenon
I saw gaze, as they passed by, many shades.

This was the matter which occasion gave 10
To them for converse of me, and they fell
To saying: "This seems no fictitious form."
Towards me then, as far as they might come,
Certain approached, but ever with regard
Not to come forth where they would not be burned.

"O thou that goest, not for lack of speed,
But for more reverence behind the rest,
Reply to me that burn in thirst and flames;
Not me alone thine answer will delight,
For all these look for it with greater thirst 20

Than *Æthiopes* or *Indians* for fresh springs :
Resolve us how thyself a wall thou makest
Against the sun, as if thou hadst not yet
Thine entrance made within the nets of death.”
Thus one accosted me ; and I had been
Disclosed to them, but that I was engrossed
By a fresh novelty which now appeared ;
For in the middle of the fiery path,
A people came with faces turned to those
Who had enforced my stay to look on them. 30
There on all sides I noted hastening
The shadows, and they severally embraced
Without cease, as content with brief salute.
Thus in the middle of their dusky throng
One ant against another’s rubs his head,
Perchance to ask the road or his success.

Soon as they broke off from their fond caress,
And ere that ever from the spot they moved,
They all vied with each other to shout forth ;
They that arrived last : “ *Sodom and Gomorrah* ;” 40
The first : “ *Pasiphæe* the heifer entered
That to his luxury the bull might run.”
Like the cranes, that to the *Riphæan* mountains
Part wing their flight, and part towards the sands,
These from the snows, those flying from the sun,
Arrived one company, the other went,
Returning to their former song in tears,
And to the shouting which became them more :
And, as the former time, accosted me
The same that had besought of me at first, 50
Revealing in their looks their wish to hear.

I who these two times their desire noted,
Began to them : “ O souls that are secure,
Whene’er it may be, to attain to peace ;

Remain not, or untimely snatched or ripe,
My limbs upon the earth, but are with me
With their articulations, and their blood.
Ascend I hence more blindness to escape ;
Above a Lady is who won the grace
Whence through your world the mortal part I bear :⁶⁰
But, as fulfilled your aspiration chief
May soon be, that the Heaven may receive you,
Which full of love is, and of amplest space ;
Tell me, that in my tablets I may write,
Who are ye, and what is this company
That moves along behind you at your backs ? ”

Not otherwise in wonder stands confused
The mountaineer, and gazing round is dumb,
When strange and rustic in the city placed,
Than every shadow now was seen to be ;
But when they were restored from their surprise,
Which soon is put by in a lofty heart :
“ O blessed thou that in our frontiers,”
Began again the same that prayed before,
“ Dost lade experience for a better life !
The people, who to meet us come, offended
In that sort, whence erst in his triumph Cæsar
Might hear himself called Queen, to his disgrace ;
Wherefore, as they break off, they Sodom cry,
Themselves reviling, as thou must have heard,
And they assist the burning by their shame.
Hermaphroditical was our sinfulness ;
But for that we exceeded human rule,
Indulging in our appetites like beasts,
To our own shame, is by ourselves pronounced
As we departure take, the name of her
That wore a brute’s form in the wooden beast.
Our acts thou knowest, and our guiltiness ;
If haply thou would’st learn us by our names,

Thou canst not know, there is not time to tell ; 80
 Be thou content to learn of me alone :
 I Guido Guinicelli ' am, thus early purged
 Because I was repentant ere the last."

Such as amid the fury of Lycurgus ¹
 Her two sons were, their mother seen again,
 Such was I then, but more restrained in joy,
 When to himself I heard give name this sire
 Of mine, and of my betters, who have e'er
 Turned courteous and dulcet rhymes of love :
 And I went musing without ear or voice 100
 For some long space, the while I gazed on him,
 Yet, for the flames, essayed not close approach.
 Soon as on gazing I had fed enough,
 Myself I offered in his service prompt,
 With such affirmance as enjoins belief.

He then to me : "Thou leavest such a trace
 And so bright in me by what now I hear,
 As Lethe cannot wash out nor dilute :
 But as I swear that I believe thy words,
 Tell me what is the reason, why thou showest 110
 By words and looks that I am dear to thee ?"

I then to him : "Thy dulcet sentences,
 Which, long as modern usage shall endure,
 Will e'en endear to us their very ink."
 "O brother," said he, "he whom I denote
 Now with my finger," and a soul ² he marked,

¹ The early Italian poet of Bologna. *Purg.* xi. 97.

² Lycurgus, king of Nemæa, enraged with Hypsipile for leaving his infant child, who was killed by a serpent, while she was showing the river Langia to the Argives (*Purg.* xxii. 112) was about to kill her, when she was found and rescued by her own sons. Statius, *Thebais*, v. 721.

³ Arnaud Daniel, one of the most celebrated of the Provençal poets, or troubadours.

" Was in his mother-tongue a better workman ;
 In amorous verses and in prose romance
 Surpassed he all ; and let the idiots talk
 Who that Limoges' bard ' excelled him thought : 120
 Rather by rumour went they, than by truth,
 And thus confirmed their own opinion
 Ere they to art or reason had lent ear.
 Many did thus of old time for Guittone,⁴
 Giving him only praise from mouth to mouth,
 Until the truth suppressed it with the most.
 Now if thou hast so large a privilege,
 That to the cloister thou hast leave to go
 Where Christ as Abbot of the college sits,
 Beg him to say for me a Paternoster, 130
 So far as in this world for us is need,
 Where ours no longer is the power to sin."

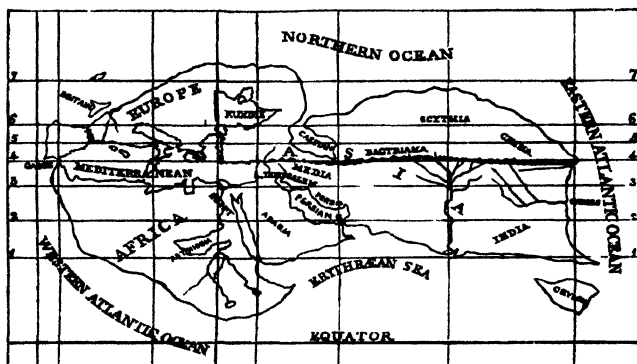
Then, haply for the other to give place,
 Who stood near, through the fire he disappeared,
 As goes a fish through water to the deep.
 To him that had been pointed out I moved,
 Saying that my affection for his name
 A favourable greeting had prepared ;
 And willingly he thus began to speak :

" So pleaseth me thy courteous demand, 140
 That if I could, I would not rest unknown ;
 Arnaud am I, that wail in song and tears,
 When on mine ancient follies I look back ;
 And I before me hail the wished-for day :
 Now by that virtue I beseech of thee,
 Which guides thee to the summit of the stair,
 Think in good season on my misery."⁵
 Then he was lost within the purging flames.

⁴ The troubadour, Gerault de Berneil.

⁵ Purg. xxiv. 56.

⁶ In the original, what is said by Arnaud is in the Provençal language.



CANTO XXVII.

PASSAGE THROUGH THE FLAMES.—DREAM OF LEAH
AND RACHEL.—VIRGIL RESIGNS HIS GUIDANCE.

As when he darts his earliest radiance
On that place where his Maker shed his blood,
And Ebro under the high Balance sinks,
And Ganges' waters in the midday glow,
So stood the sun ; ¹ and so the day was spent,
When to us joyfully appeared God's angel.
Beyond the flames he stood upon the bank,
And chanted : "*Blessed are the pure in heart,*"
In accents that were clearer than a man's :
And then : " No way is, unless firsts afflicts

10

¹ It is 6 P.M. " The sun (in Aries) is rising at Jerusalem : Libra is over Spain, and it is noon at the Ganges. Purg. iv. 139.

The fire, O holy spirits ; enter it,
And to the song on this side be not deaf."

Thus spoke he, as we near to him approached ;
At which on hearing such one I became
As he that in his sepulchre is laid.
Upwards I raised my hands together clasped,
Seeing the flames, and vividly recalling
The human forms which I had burning seen.
My good companions turned them round to me,
And Virgil thus addressed me : " O my son, 20
Here may be torment, but there is not death :
Remember thee, remember——and if I
In safety guided thee upon that Geryon,²
More can I do now, since more near to God.
Receive for certain, that if in the womb
Of this flame thou didst lie a thousand years,
It would not injure thee a single hair ;
And if perchance thou thinkest I deceive,
Approach to it, and make experiment 30
Holding thy garment's lappet in thy hands.
Therefore dismiss, dismiss now thine affright ;
Plunge, and pass safely to the other side."
But I stood fast, against my conscience,
And when he saw me standing fast and still,
In some vexation said he : " See, my son,
'This is the wall 'twixt thee and Beatrice."
As at the name of Thisbe raised his eyes
The dying Pyramus, and looked on her,
What time the mulberry was to purple turned ;
Thus, all my stubbornness subdued in me, 40
I turned to my wise guide, when heard the name
That ever in my mind was uppermost.
Nodded he then the head, and said : " How now !

² In. xvii.

Wilt thou on that side stand ? ” and then he smiled
 As at a child that is enticed by fruit.
 Before me then he walked into the flames,
 Entreating Statius to follow after,
 Who erst had separate been by greater space.
 Soon as I entered, into molten glass
 I would have leaped amain to cool myself, 51
 So great was the immeasurable heat.
 My loving Father, to encourage me,
 Of nothing spoke but Beatrice as we went,
 Saying : “ E’en now I seem to see her eyes.”

Our guide in that place was a voice that sang,
 And we, attention wholly giving it,
 Came forth at where rose upwards the ascent.
 “ *Come ye, ye blessed of my Father come,* ” ³
 Was heard from out a light, that was there seen,
 Such that it blinded, and I could not look : 52
 “ The sun departs,” it added, “ and comes night ;
 Delay not, but be instant for the pass,
 Before the western sky is turned to dark.”

The passage in the rock ascended straight
 In such direction that I stopped the rays
 Before me of the sun, that now was wearied ;
 And of few steps we had essayed the proof,
 When, by the shadow lost that ~~sank~~ the sun
 Behind us was, I and my Sages knew. 70
 And ere that in the whole of its wide sweep
 Of the same aspect was the horizon made,
 And night was universally diffused,
 Each of us chose a step to be his couch ;
 For here the nature of the mount destroys
 The power as well as the desire to climb.

³ Matthew, xxv. 34.

Like as are quiet when they chew the cud,
The goats (that have been bold and wantoning
Upon the ridges, ere they took their meal)
In the shade resting, while the sun is hot,
Watched by their herdsman that upon his staff ⁸⁰
Supports himself, and guards them thus supported ;
And like the shepherd when he bivouacks
The livelong night beside his silent flock,
And keeps a watch against despoiling beasts ;
Not otherwise at that time were we three,
I like a goat, and like the herdsmen they,
Enclosed on either hand within the rock.

Without was seen but little of the sky ;
But in that little I could note the stars
Larger and more resplendent than their wont. ⁹⁰
Thus musing, and thus looking upon these,
Sleep fell on me ; the sleep that oftentimes
Of things ere acted has intelligence.
It was the hour I think, when from the East
First Cytherea beams upon the mount,
She that glows ever with the fire of love ;
Methought that in my dream a young and fair
Lady I saw, that wandered on a lawn
Gathering flowers, and in song she said :
“ Whoever seeks to learn my name may know ¹⁰⁰
That I am Leah, and I occupy
My dainty hands in making me a wreath :
I deck me here for pleasure at my glass ;
But Rachel, that my sister is, ne’er leaves
Her mirror, and sits by it all the day.
She is rejoiced to view her own fair eyes,
As I am to adorn me with my hands :
Action fits me, and contemplation her.” ¹¹⁰

* Leah and Rachel are the types of the active and the contemplative life.

And now before the light which marshals day,
That rises sweeter to the traveller, 110
The nearer home he rests on his return,
Away in every quarter darkness fled,
And my dream with it ; then I raised myself
Seeing already the great Masters risen.
“ The pleasant fruit which through so many boughs
Seeking, the anxiety of man pursues,
This day will set thy hungerings at peace : ”
Virgil towards me in such form as this
Addressed some words ; and never was there gift,
That could in pleasure be with them compared ; 120
And such an access of desire came on
To be above, that now at every pace
I seemed to feel wings growing as for flight.

When underneath us now the stair complete
Was past, and we were on the topmost step,
Upon me Virgil settled his regards,
And said : “ The fires temporal and eternal,
My son, thou hast seen, and hast reached a place,
Where of myself I cannot further see.
Thus far by skill and knowledge have I led ; 130
From hence take thine own pleasure for thy guide,
Thou art beyond the rough and narrow ways.
Behold the sun now shining on thy brows ;
Behold the grass, the flowers, and the trees,
Borne by the earth spontaneous from itself ;
Until thou seest those fair eyes in joy,
Which as they wept commissioned me to thee,
Thou mayst or rest, or mayst among these go.
Expect from me no further speech or sign :
Released, erect, and healthful is thy will, 140
And not to obey its judgment would be fault ;
Whence o’er thyself I crown and mitre thee.” *

* I make thee king and priest. See Rev. i. 6.

CANTO XXVIII.

THE EARTHLY PARADISE.—THE RIVER LETHE.—THE
COUNTESS MATILDA.

DESIROUS now to explore within and round
The divine forest thick and flourishing
Which tempered to the eyes the youthful day,
Without delay I left the mountain's edge,
Leisurely roaming over the champaign
Upon a soil that breathed all odours sweet.
A balmy air, which no vicissitude
Had in it, smote upon me in the front,
With softer impulse than a gentle wind;
By which the sprays in quivering accord,
Were one and all towards that quarter bowed
Where casts the holy mountain its first shade;
Yet from the straight position were not bent
So much, as made the birds upon their tops
Cease from the exercise of all their skill;
But with a full delight the early hours,
Singing, they welcomed 'mong the foliage
Which joined its burden to their minstrelsy,
Such as is taken up from branch to branch
Through the pine grove upon Chiassi's shore,¹
When Æolus unlooses the Sirocco.

10

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¹ On the Adriatic, near Ravenna.

My loitering steps had ere now carried me
 So deep within the ancient wood, that I
 Could not the way by which I entered trace :
 When lo ! a stream my further progress checked,
 That to the left hand with its little waves
 Bore down the herbage growing on its bank.
 All waters, that the clearest are on earth,
 Would seem to have in them impurity,
 Compared with this, which nothing in it hides ; 30
 Yet black and darkling on its course it runs
 Beneath the everlasting shade, which ne'er
 Allows the sun to shine there nor the moon.
 With steps restrained, and with mine eyes I passed
 Beyond the rivulet, in wonderment
 At the diversity of blooming trees :
 And then appeared to me, as there appears
 A thing upon the sudden, which expels
 In marvelling at it, all other thoughts,
 / A Lady³ without company, that went 40
 In song, and plucking flowers from the flowers
 With which her path was all enamelléd.

" O Lady fair, that with the beams of love
 Dost glow, if only I may trust the signs
 That wont to be the witness of the heart,
 May thy good pleasure lead thee in advance,"
 Thus I addressed me to her, " to this stream,
 That I may listen to thy melody :
 For thou remindest me of what and where
 Was Proserpine⁴ upon that time when lost 50
 Her mother her, and she the prime of spring."

³ This lady, who has been prefigured by Leah and Rachel in the last Canto, also is a type of the active and of the contemplative life. She is afterwards (Purg xxxiii. 119), called Matilda, and has always been identified with the famous Countess of Tuscany of that name ; who died 1115, and left her possessions to the Church of Rome.

⁴ When carried off by Pluto from the flowery plain of Enna.

Like as when turns, with feet that ever seek
The floor, held close, a lady in the dance,
And one foot scarce before the other puts,
So turned she on the damask and the golden
Flowers towards me, and resembled then
A maiden as she veils her modest eyes ;
And to my supplication gave content
Drawing so near to me that the sweet sound
And its significance to me arrived. 61
Soon as she reached the part where the green sward
Was by the waters of the fair stream bathed,
She gave me guerdon of her lifted eyes.
Not such a splendour, as I think, shone forth
Under the lids of Venus, when transfixed
By her own son, in unaccustomed wise.
Smiling upon the other bank she stood,
Bearing the many flowers in her hands
Which that high region without sowing yields. 70
Three paces only the stream interposed,
But Hellespont where Xerxes passed across
(That bridle to the insolence of men)
Was by Leander not more held in hate,
For flowing between Lesbos and Abydos,
Than this by me, because it opened not.

“ Strange are ye, and perchance why I rejoice,”
She thus began, “ in this place set apart
To be the cradle of the human race,
Some doubts possess you in your marvelling ;
The psalm, ‘ *For thou hast made me glad* ’ throws light “
To clear the mist from round your intellect ;
And thou that comest first, and hast besought me,
Say if thou would’st hear more ; for I am prompt
For all thy questions, until satisfied.”

‘ “ For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works : and I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of thy hands.” Ps. xcii. 4.

"The stream," I said, "and murmurs of this grove .
Impugn to me the new acquired faith
In which the contrary of this I learned."^a
Then she: "I will instruct thee how proceeds
From its own causes this which makes thee wonder,
And I will clear the mist which troubles thee. 90
'The Highest Good, to itself only pleasing,
Created man good, and this place's joys
Gave him for earnest of eternal peace.
Here stayed he short time by his own default ;
By his own fault for sorrow and for toil
He changed the guileless smile, and pastime sweet.
That the commotions, which beneath it cause
The exhalations of the earth and sea,
Which far as may be, back to heat return,
Might no annoy occasion to mankind, 100
Thus high the mountain towers in the sky,
And is exempt from them above the gate.
But since throughout the circuit of its orb
The air revolves with the first moving sphere,
Unless its round in any place is broken ;
Upon this summit, which stands disenthralled
In the pure atmosphere, the motion strikes
The wood, and makes it sound as being thick ;
And every tree when struck has such effect
That with its properties it fills the air 110
Which after drops them as it circles round ;
And the other earth, according as it fits
In soil or climate, welcomes and adopts
The different plants of different properties :
On earth no longer therefore should surprise,
This being understood, if any plant
Establishes itself without known seed :
And be instructed, that the holy plain,

^a Purg. xxi. 52. Where Statius says there is no wind nor moisture above the Gate of Purgatory.

Where now thou art, is full of every seed,
And has its fruits that are not plucked on earth. 140

“ The stream thou seest flows not from a spring
Supplied by vapour which the cold condenses,
Like rivers that or lose or gather force,
But issues from a fountain sure and full,
Which only from the will of God receives
What down its double opening it pours ;
On this side with a virtue it descends,
To take away the memory of sin ;
Upon the other restores that of good deeds.
Here Lethe, as upon the other side 131
Eunöe called ; and no effect it works
Tasted unless it be both here and there.
Rises above all other flavours this ;
And although in sufficiency content
Should be thy thirst, whence no more I disclose,
For further grace I give this corollary ;
Nor, as I think, less prized will be my words,
If for thee their permission they transgress.
They that of old times wrote in poetry
Of the golden age, and of its happy state, 141
Dreamed haply in Parnassus of this place ;
Here was the root of mankind innocent ;
Here was perpetual spring and every fruit ;
This is that Nectar, of which speak they all.”

Upon this, round I turned again to view
My Poets, and remarked that with a smile
To this last explanation they gave ear :
Then on the Lady fair I bent my gaze.

CANTO XXIX.

THE PROCESSION OF THE SEVEN CANDLESTICKS —THE TWENTY-
FOUR ELDERS.—THE GRYPHON'S CAR, &c.

LIKE to a lady who enamoured sings,
She added in completion of her lay :
“ *Blessed is he whose sin is coveréd ;*”¹
And like unto the nymphs who go alone
Among the forest shadows, in the wish
Some to avoid and some to see the sun ;
Against the stream so moved she, as she went
Along the bank, and I kept pace with her,
Gently accompanying her gentle steps.
Together made we not an hundred steps
When the banks one and other gave a turn,
In such wise that I faced toward the east ;
Nor in this manner held we long our way,
When wholly round to me the Lady turned,
Saying : “ O look and listen, brother mine ! ”

And lo ! a brightness suddenly that ran
Through the great forest upon every side,
Such that I fancied it was lightening ;
But because lightning as it comes departs,
And this with growing splendour did endure,

¹ Ps. xxxii. 1.

Within myself I said : What thing is this ?
And a sweet melody was borne along
Through the illumined air ; then righteous zeal
Made me reprove Eve's curiosity,
Because where heaven and the earth obeyed,
She, only woman, and but newly formed ;
Could not be patient underneath the veil ;
Under which if she had devout remained,
I should have these ineffable delights
Felt from the first, and after for long time. 40
While thus among the first fruits I was going
Of the eternal pleasures, total rapt,
And was yet longing for the further joys ;
In front of us, as 'twere a blazing fire,
The air showed underneath the verdant boughs,
And now as singing the sweet tone was heard.

O sacred Virgins, if e'er hungerings,
Vigils, and cold, for you I have endured,
Let this excuse me if I call for aid ;
Through me let Helicon its waters pour, 45
And with her choir Urania give aid,
To think and to express great things in verse.

Further advancing, seven trees of gold
Falsely the long space to the eye set forth,
Which interposed between ourselves and them ;
But when I drew near the reality,
So that the object which had snared the sense
None of its features in the distance lost ;
The sense which brings opinion to the proof,
Instructed me that they were candlesticks, 50
And that the voices did "Hosanna" sing.
Above shone out their brilliant furniture,
More splendid than the moon in a clear sky
At midnight in the middle of her month.

I turned me round of admiration full
To the good Virgil, and he answered me
With looks that of amazement wore no less :
Then on those lofty things again I looked,
Moving towards us at such solemn pace
As by a new-made bride would be surpassed. 61
The Lady cried to me : " Why dost thou gaze
Thus at the appearance of the burning lights,
And dost not look on what comes after them ? "
Then I saw people that as on their guides
On these close followed in white robes arrayed,
And no such whiteness ever was on earth.
The water glittered upon my left hand,
And back to me reflected my left side,
Like to a mirror when I looked on it.

When on my bank such station I had gained, 70
That only by the stream I was removed,
For better view I brought my steps to rest ;
And saw the flames as they in progress went,
Leaving the atmosphere behind them dyed ;
And they to streaming pennons semblance bore,
So that on high continued they, distinct
In seven trains, and of such colours all
As the sun's bow is of, or Delia's zone.²
These banners were extended to the rear
Beyond my vision, and as I could judge, 10
The outer two ten paces were apart.
Under the gorgeous sky, as thus described,
Twenty-four elders, walking two by two,
And crowned with flowers of the lily, marched.
Chanted they all of them : " O blessed thou
Of Adam's daughters, and all hallowéd
Be for eternity thine excellence ! "

² The halo round the moon.

Soon as the flowers and the herbage green
 In front of me upon the other bank
 Were passed by that elected company ; 90
 As in the heavens rises star on star,
 Close after these, four living creatures went,
 Crowned each of them with verdant foliage ;
 And with six pinions each of them was winged,
 The feathers full of eyes ; and Argus' eyes
 If they existed would be such as these.
 Further to tell their shape I cannot spare
 Verses, O Reader; presses other charge
 So much, that here I may not be diffuse :
 But in Ezekiel³ read, where he relates 100
 How from the frosty region he beheld them
 Come out with whirlwind, fire, and with cloud ;
 And as in his page thou wilt meet with them,
 Such were they here ; except that for the wings
 With me Saint John⁴ is, and departs from him.
 The space that was between these four contained
 A chariot borne on two triumphal wheels
 Drawn by a Gryphon, by the neck attached,
 And he bore raised his either wing aloft
 Between the mid train, and the three and three, 110
 To injure none of them by crossing it,
 Rising so high, that they could not be seen.
 The part that was a bird's he had of gold,
 The other part of white and ruddy mixed :
 Not only Rome with such a sumptuous car
 Augustus greeted not, nor Africanus,
 But e'en the sun's would be but mean by it ;
 That of the sun which wandering⁵ was burned

³ Ezekiel i. 4. "And I looked, and behold a whirlwind came out of the north," &c.

⁴ Rev. ix. 8, where the beasts seen by St. John have six wings, whereas Ezekiel saw them with four wings.

⁵ When driven by Phæton.

Upon the prayer of supplicating Earth,
When Jove in his deep purposes was just.

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Three Ladies⁶ by the right wheel in a round
Came dancing : one of such a ruddy hue
That within flame she hardly had been seen ;
Another was as if her flesh and bones
Had been created of the emerald ;
The third appeared as newly-driven snow :
And now they seemed as led by her in white,
Now by the red, and to her melody
The others timed their movement quick or slow.
Four⁷ were there on the left hand that rejoiced
In purple vestments, following the lead
Of one of them with in her head three eyes.
Following upon this interwoven group
I saw two old men differing in dress,
But each in gesture reverend and staid.
One of them showed as a familiar
Of worthiest Hippocrates, whom nature
Made for her creatures whom she chiefly loves :
The other showed the contrary pursuit,
Bearing a keen-edged and resplendent sword,
Which made me tremble on my side the stream.
Then I saw four that went in lowly guise,
And after all an old man that alone
And sleeping went, but with rapt countenance.
These seven like those in the pageant first
Were habited ; but of the lily-bloom
Around the head they wore no coronals,
But one of roses and of flowers red :
One might have sworn to look on them from far,

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⁶ The three theological virtues—Faith, Hope, and Charity.

⁷ The four moral virtues—Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance. The leader is Prudence, with three eyes, as seeing the past, the present, and the future.

That they were burning from above the brow.
Soon as the car to me was opposite,
It thundered ; and this honourable troop
Seemed as if further progress were forbid,
For with the ensigns seen at first they stopped.*

159

* In the allegorical procession of this Canto, the Seven Candlesticks, which lead the way, may perhaps be taken as a type (by a single instance of its ceremonial) of the Jewish dispensation (Exod. xxv. 31). The twenty-four Elders are the Books of the Old Testament, which, according to the arrangement of St. Jerome, are of that number, and as follows : 1. Genesis. 2. Exodus. 3. Leviticus. 4. Numbers. 5. Deuteronomy. 6. Joshua. 7. Judges. 8. Samuel. 9. Kings. 10. Isaiah. 11. Jeremiah. 12. Ezekiel. 13. Minor Prophets. 14. Job. 15. Ruth. 16. Psalms. 17. Proverbs. 18. Ecclesiastes. 19. Song of Solomon. 20. Daniel. 21. Chronicles. 22. Esdras. 23. Esther. 24. Lamentations. The Four Beasts are the Four Gospels, which complete the succession of sacred books up to the establishment of the Church of Christ. The Gryphon, half eagle and half lion, represents Christ in his double nature, divine and human. The car is the Visible Church, supported by the Moral and Theological Virtues. The Book of the Acts of the Apostles is represented by its author, Luke the Physician ; and the Epistles of St. Paul by their writer, who carries his usual emblem, a sword. The minor Epistles of Peter, John, Jude, and James come next ; and the procession is ended by St. John as the writer of the Book of Revelations, which closes the canon of Scripture.



CANTO XXX.

BEATRICE.

WHEN the Septentrion¹ of the early heaven,
 (Which neither knows of setting nor of rise,
 Nor other clouding than the veil of sin,
 And which in that place made each one aware
 Of what his duty is, as the lower stars
 What course to steer by to attain the port,)
 Was planted firm : the truthful company
 That first advanced between it and the Gryphon
 Turned to the chariot as to their peace :

¹ The seven lights of the Candlesticks are called the Septentrion of the sky of the Earthly Paradise, after the seven stars, so named, of the Great Bear in the northern hemisphere.

And one² of them as if from Heaven sent
 Singing : "*Veni sponsa de Libano*,"
 Three times cried out, and after him the rest.
 Like as the blest at the last summoning
 Will rise each ready from his sepulchre,
 Using in Alleluias their new voice ;
 So these upon the heavenly chariot,
 A hundred mounted, at that elder's voice,
 Heralds and ministers of eternal life ;
 Exclaimed they all : "*Qui venis benedictus*,"³
 And casting flowers upwards and around,
 "*Manibus O date lilia plenis*."⁴

I have seen sometime at the break of day
 The eastern quarter in one rosy blush,
 And all the rest in tranquil beauty decked,
 While the sun's disc was rising cloud-involved,
 So that by tempering of the vapour mists
 'The eye could bear him for a certain space :
 Not otherwise within a cloud of flowers
 'That from angelic hands were upward thrown
 And fell again within and round the car,
 Under a white veil, and with olive crowned,
 Appeared a Lady in a mantle green,
 Vested in colour of the living flame :
 And then my spirit, that had for so long
 A time remained, since when before her presence
 In trembling wonder it was overcome,
 Without more information from the eyes,
 By occult virtue from her emanating,
 Agnized the mighty power of former love,
 So soon as to my sight was manifest

² Solomon—whose Song is one of the twenty-four books of the Old Testament in Jerome's arrangement. From this he sings, "Come with me from Lebanon, my Spouse." Sol. Song, iv. 8.

³ "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt., xxi. 9.

⁴ "O scatter lilies from full hands." Æneid, vi. 884.

The lofty excellence that fixed me erst,
Before that I my boyhood had outgrown.

I turned me to the left in reverence
With like of which a child his mother seeks,
When in alarm he is or in distress,
To say to Virgil : "There is not a drop
Of blood that in me is that trembles not ;
I know the tokens of my former flame :"
But Virgil had no traces left behind
Of himself ; Virgil, father best beloved ;
Virgil, to whom she gave me for my health :
Nor did that which our ancient mother lost
Preserve my cheeks, before of moisture free,
From plenteous bedewment with my tears.⁵

"Dante, because departed hence is Virgil
Lament no more ; lament not any more ;
A different stroke hereafter thou mayst wail."
Like to an admiral that on poop or prow
Comes forth to view the companies who serve
The other ships, encouraging their toil,
Upon the left part of the chariot,
When I turned round on hearing my own name
(Which of necessity is here enrolled)
I saw the Lady, that had erst appeared
Veiled underneath that angel revelry,
Turn her eyes on me from that side the stream ;
Although the veil which from her head fell down,
That with Minerva's foliage was wreathed
Did not allow her wholly to be seen.
Royally, wearing still a lofty mien,
Continued she, and like an orator
Who keeps his highest matter for the last :

⁵ The enjoyment of Paradise did not prevent my sorrow at Virgil's departure.

"Look on me well, for I am Beatrice ;
 How hast thou deigned to approach the mount ?
 Didst thou not know that man is happy here ?"
 Mine eyes sank down to the pellucid stream,
 But seeing myself in it I sought the grass,
 A shame so deep was weighing on my brow.
 So to her child a mother seems severe,
 As she to me appeared, when bitterly
 He feels the taste of her stern tenderness.
 She ceased from speaking, and the Angels sang
 Without pause : "*In te Domine speravi ;*"
 But beyond "*pedes meos*" did not go.*

Like as the snow among the living beams⁷
 Upon the back of Italy congeals,
 Bound up while breathed on by Slavonian winds,
 But thawing afterwards melts into itself,
 What time the wind blows from the shadeless land,⁸
 Like as a candle in the fire wastes ;
 E'en so was I without a sigh or tear
 Before the song of them who time their notes
 Following the notes of the eternal spheres ;
 But when I heard in their sweet harmonies
 Their pity for me, more than if they had said :
 "O Lady, wherefore dost confound him thus ?"
 The ice that lay close pressing on my heart
 To tears and sobs turned, and in agony
 Discharged my bosom by the lips and eyes.

She, unmoved, on the side that has been named¹⁰⁰
 Of the car standing, to the Holy Beings

* They sang Psalm xxxi., from the beginning, "In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust," to the end of the 9th verse (of the English version).

⁷ In the forests on the Apennines.

⁸ From the land of the Aescii, or shadowless men of the ancient astronomers, in which, when the sun is vertical, no shadows are cast. Here put for Africa.

Addressed on this wise afterwards her words :

“ Ye keep your watches in the eternal day,
So that ye are not robbed by night or sleep
Of any stage of time upon the road ;
Wherefore mine answer is with more intent
That he should hear who on that side laments,
And of one measure be his crimes and grief.
Not only by the influence of the spheres
Which to some destiny every seed direct,
According as the stars bear company ;
But in abundance of the heavenly graces
Which fall in showers from such lofty clouds,
That to them cannot make approach our sight,
This man was such an one in his New Life⁹

110

Potentially, that all the ways of good
In him had shown experience marvellous :
But more unprofitable and more rank
Becomes with evil seed an untilled field
By how much it has greater strength of soil.
For sometime I upheld him by my looks ;
Revealing unto him my youthful eyes,
I led him with me turned to the right way.
So soon as I upon the threshold stood
Of my next age, and I exchanged my life,
He left me and to others he betook.

120

When from the flesh to spirit I uprose,
And excellence and virtue in me grew,
Less precious was I to him and less dear ;
And he his footsteps to a false way turned,
Following deceitful semblances of good,
That never keep their promise in the deed ;
Nought it availed that I won inspirations
With which in dreams of sleep, and otherwise
I called on him ; so little heed he took.

130

⁹ The time when Dante became acquainted with Beatrice, which is described by him in his work called the “ Vita Nuova,” or “ New Life.”

He fell so deeply, that all arguments
For his salvation now would not suffice,
Except the showing him the people damned.
For this I sought the portal of the dead,
And to him who has guided him thus high
My supplications, as I wept, were borne.
God's lofty purpose would be broken through,
If passed were Lethe, and what it provides
Were tasted of, without a reckoning
Of penitence that is expressed by tears."

.40

CANTO XXXI.

BEATRICE—THE PASSAGE OF LETHE—THE MORAL AND
THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES.

“O THOU on that side of the holy stream,”
Turning on me the point of her discourse,
Which in its side-cut seemed to me so keen,
She recommenced, continuing without pause,
“Say, say, if this be true; to such a charge
Becomes it thy confession should ensue.”
So far confounded were my faculties
That my voice started, but it dropped before
It by its proper organs was sent forth.
She paused awhile; then said: “On what dost think?”
Reply to me; for the sad memories
In thee are not yet by the waters chased.”
Together terror and confusion blent
To such a “yes” compelled me from my lips,
That to perceive it there was need of sight.
Like as a cross-bow shivers if let off
When strained too tightly in the bow and cord,
And with less force the arrow hits the mark;
So underneath this vast load did I burst
Discharging from my bosom tears and sobs,
And weakened in its passage was my voice.
She then to me: “Athwart my good desires

Which have persuaded thee to love the good .
Beyond which is no room for aspiration,
What fetters, or what ravines in thy path,
Hast thou encountered, that of onward march
Thou hast abandoned on this wise the hope?
And what charms or what profitableness
Have in the face of others been displayed
To make thee, as thou hast, consort with them? ” 30

After the heaving of a bitter sigh,
To make an answer I had scarcely voice,
And with exertion my lips fashioned it.
Weeping I said : “ The things of present life
By their deceitful pleasure turned my steps,
So soon as e’er thy countenance was hid.”
And she : “ Hadst thou been silent or denied
What stands confessed now, not the less were known
Thy fault, by such judge is it understood :
But when proceeds from out a man’s own mouth 40
Sin’s accusation, then in our court
Against the sword’s edge is the grindstone turned.
But that thou mayst observe the better shame
For thy transgression, and that other times
Hearing the sirens, thou mayst be more brave,
Put by the seeds of weeping and give ear :
Thus wilt thou learn how to the opposite course
The burial of my flesh should thee have led.
Never will art or nature set before thee
Delight such as the fair form in which I 50
Was held, which now is back to earth returned ;
And if thy chiefest pleasure failed thee thus
Upon my death, what of mortality
Ought to engage thee in affection for it ?
It was thy duty, at the earliest shafts
Of these delusive things, to soar aloft
To follow me that was no longer such :

Became thee not to stoop thy wings below,
More shots to await, as either some young girl,
Or other vanity of fleeting use :
For two or three awaits the callow bird
But in the view of them that are full fledged
In vain the nets are spread, or arrows shot.”

As children who are silent in their shame,
With eyes turned on the ground stand listening,
Confessing and repentant of their fault,
So did I stand, and she went on : “ Although
Hearing thou weepest, upward raise thy beard,
And thou from looking shalt receive more grief.”
With not so much resistance is torn up
A mighty oak-tree, or by our own wind
Or by that from the country of Iarbas,¹
Than I at her commandment raised my face ;
And when my face she designated “ beard ”
I fully knew the sting of her rebuke :²
And when my countenance was thus upward turned,
That ceased those primally created Beings³
From scattering the flowers, learned my sight :
And mine eyes, still but little confident,
Saw Beatrice advance above the animal
That in two natures is a single person.

Under her veil, on the other side the bank
Luxuriant, more her ancient self she seemed
To excel, than she did others when on earth.
So stung me now the nettle of repentance,
That of all other things, the more they led
From love of her, the more I hated them.

¹ Either by the north wind of Europe, or by the south wind blowing from Africa.

² As implying a want of the wisdom which should belong to manhood.

³ The angels.

Remorse so mighty preyed upon my heart
That I sank overcome; what then I did
She knows who the occasion for it gave.

90

Soon as my heart restored my outward sense,
The Lady⁴ whom I there had found alone,
I saw above me, saying: "Hold me fast."
She plunged me in the river to the mouth,
And drawing me after her, she sped away
Swift as a weaver's shuttle, on the water.
When to the blessed margin I drew near,
"*Asperges me*,"⁵ in such sweet tones I heard
That I can neither write them nor recall.
The beauteous Lady opened wide her arms,
Embraced me round the head, immersing me,
To where I scaped not drinking of the wave.
She drew me thence, and bathed presented me
Within the dance of those four lovely ones,
And each of them enclasped me in her arms.
"Here we are nymphs, in heaven we are stars;⁶
Or ever Beatrice to the world descended,
To be her hand-maidens we were ordained.
We to her eyes will lead, but to the sweet
Light that within them is, will sharpen thine
The Three on that side, who more deeply look:"
Singing began they thus; and afterwards
Led me with them towards the Gryphon's breast,
Where Beatrice was standing to us turned.
They said: "Be not a miser of thy looks;
'Thee have we placed before the emeralds,'
Whence for thee love did erst his weapons draw."
A thousand wishes burning more than flame
Fastened mine eyes upon the shining eyes

100

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⁴ Matilda.

⁵ "Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." Ps. li. 7.

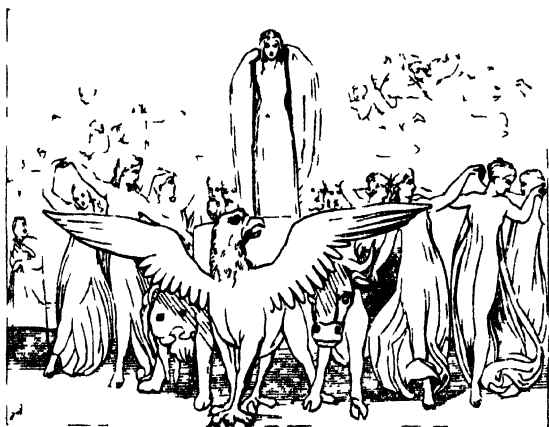
⁶ Pg., i. 23.

⁷ The eyes of Beatrice.

That rested steadfastly upon the Gryphon. 120
Like as upon a mirror does the sun,
The twofold animal upon them streamed
In first one, then the other habitude.
Consider, Reader, how must I have marvelled
When thus I saw the object undisturbed,
And in its reflex image so transformed.

While filled with wonder thus, and in delight
My soul was feeding on this nourishment,
Which as it satisfies, gives appetite,
Showing themselves of more exalted kind 130
By their deportment, came the other Three
Treading the dance in their angelic round.
“Turn, Beatrice, O turn thy holy eyes,”
Thus ran their song, “upon thy faithful one
Who has for sight of thee such journey made.
For graciousness do us the grace to unveil
Thy countenance to him, that he may see
The second beauty which thou keepest hid.”

O splendour of the living light eternal !
Who is there, pale with study in the shade 140
Of Mount Parnassus, or has drunk its fount,
That would not seem to have a mind distracted,
Essaying to describe thee, as beheld,
With melody by heaven canopied,
When thou didst give thyself to open day !



CANTO XXXII.

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE — THE ASCENT OF THE GRYPHON —
THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE CAR

MINE eyes were so intent and rivetted
To satisfy the longing of ten years,¹
That all the other senses were extinct ;
And upon either hand these had a screen
Of inobservance ; so the blessed smile
Drew them towards it with its ancient net ;
When round I turned my visage by constraint
Of those divine nymphs on the left hand side,
Because I heard them say : “ Too earnestly.”
And such condition as is found of sight
In eyes that are new smitten by the sun,
Of vision robbed me for a certain space ;

10

¹ Beatrice died in 1290

But when I sight regained for things less bright
(I say less bright compared with the intense
Sensation from which I by force withdrew)
I saw that to the right hand side did turn
The glorious army, and it wheeled around
Keeping the sun and seven flames in front.
As under the protection of their shields
A squadron wheels, and with its standard turns, 20
Before the whole of them their front can change ;
So this militia of the heavenly kingdom,
Who led the van, completely faced about
Before the car was by its beam dragged on.
Returned the Ladies back then to the wheels,
And moved the Gryphon with his blessed load,
Yet not a feather on him was disturbed.

The Lady fair who brought me to the ford,
And I and Statius followed on that wheel
Which made its orbit in the lesser curve : 10
Thus passing through the high wood, that is void
By her fault who gave credence to the serpent,
An angel music to our steps gave time.
Perhaps as far as measures in three flights
An arrow when discharged, so far had we
Moved onwards, when alighted Beatrice.
I heard a murmuring from all of : " Adam ;"
Then round a tree they formed that was despoiled
Of blossom and its leaves in every branch.
Its branches which as they the more outspread 40
The higher are, would be by Indians
Admired in their forests for their height.

"Blessed art thou, O Gryphon, not to rend
With thy teeth this tree to the palate sweet,
Because through it the appetite has erred :"
So, in a circle round that mighty tree

Cried out the rest ; the twofold animal :
 " Thus of all justice is preserved the seed ;"
 And turning to the car which he had drawn,
 He drew it to the foot of that stripped tree,
 And its own part of it, to it left bound.

Like as our plants on earth, what time descends
 The greater light ² when mingling with that
 Which following the heavenly Fishes shines,
 Begin to swell, and after is renewed
 Each in its proper bloom, or ere the Sun
 Couples his steeds beneath another star ;
 Between the hue of rose and violet,
 Putting forth blossoms, was the tree renewed
 That had at first its boughs so desolate.

Never I heard, nor e'er on earth is sung
 The hymn which chanted now this company,
 Nor did I hear this to its final notes.
 Could I describe how into slumber sank
 The unrelenting eyes, of Syrinx hearing,
 The eyes whose wondrous vision cost them dear,³
 Then like a painter drawing from a subject
 I might set down the way I fell asleep ;
 But who is he that can describe his sleep ?
 Therefore I pass on to when I awoke,
 Relating how a bright light rent the veil
 Of sleep, and then a shouting : " Rise, what dost ?"

As to behold that apple-tree ⁴ in bloom,
 Which makes the Angels hunger for its fruit,

² When the Sun is in Aries, the sign next after Pisces ; that is, in the Spring.

³ Argus, chosen for his hundred eyes to be the guardian of Io, was lulled to sleep by the tale of the nymph Syrinx, and then slain by Mercury. Ovid. Met. i. 689.

⁴ "As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." Sol. Song. ii. 3. Applied to Christ at the Transfiguration.

And keeps in Heaven perpetual marriage feast,
 Peter and John and James were led apart,
 And were from slumber by that voice aroused
 Before which deeper sleep⁶ has been dispelled,
 And found their company in number less
 By Moses and Elias that were gone,
 And that their Master's raiment was rechanged ;
 So turned I round ; and saw that holy one
 Above me standing, who had pioneer
 Been of my steps erewhile along the stream :
 Uncertain asked I : " Where is Beatrice ?"
 And she : " Her mayst thou see beneath the leaves
 Newly put forth, and sitting on their trunk."
 I saw surrounding her, her retinue ;
 Following the Gryphon all the rest ascended
 With melodies aye deeper and more sweet :
 And if their singing for long time endured
 I know not ; for was now before mine eyes
 She who forbade me to heed other things.
 Resting alone on the true earth⁶ she sat
 Like to a guardian left there of the car,
 Which I saw harnessed to the twofold beast.
 In a closed circle then arranged themselves
 The seven nymphs, with in their hands those lights
 That are from Aquilo and Auster safe.

" Brief time a stranger shalt thou be on earth,
 And ever shalt with me be citizen
 Of that Rome of which Christ a Roman is.
 Therefore for profit of an evil world,
 Observe the chariot, and what thou seest,
 When to the world returned, be sure thou write."

⁶ Namely the sleep of death, as with Lazarus and others raised from death by Christ.

⁶ The soil of the Garden of Paradise, as being the abode designed for man, who is not in his true home while only a citizen of the present world. See v. 100.

Thus Beatrice ; and I that at the feet
Of her commandments was as one devoted,
As she desired, gave my looks and thoughts.

Descends not with so great rapidity
Out of a thick cloud fire, what time it falls 10
From regions that the furthest are removed,
As I saw swoop the bird of Jupiter
Down on the tree, and rending off the bark,
The flowers, and the new acquired leaves ;
And with his whole might he the chariot struck,
To which it yielded, as a ship in storm,
Larboard and starboard by the billows whelmed.
Afterwards I saw leap upon the frame
Of the triumphal chariot a fox,
That seemed as fasting from all wholesome food : 100
But with reproaches of its hideous crimes
The Lady mine compelled it to such flight,
As would permit to it its sapless bones.
Then from the spot whence it at first approached,
I saw descend the eagle on the body
Of the car, feathering it from itself.
And such as issues from a grieving heart,
A voice from Heaven came, and thus it spoke :
“ O vessel mine, how evil art thou freighted ! ”
Then the earth opened, as to me appeared, 120
”Twixt the two wheels, and I saw rise a dragon
Who through the chariot upward thrust his tail ;
And like a wasp that plucks away his sting,
Drawing towards him his envenomed tail,
Tore part from off the base, and went in joy.
That which remained, like as with herbage is
A lively soil, with feathers, (that were offered
Haply with an intention good and pure)
Was covered, and with them were mantled over 140
The two wheels and the pole-beam in the time

For which the mouth unclosed could hold the breath.
 When thus transformed, the holy edifice
 From various parts of it developed heads,
 Three on the beam, and one upon each side :
 'The first of these were hornéd like an ox,
 But the four had a single horn in front ;
 Like of this prodigy was never scen.

Firm as a rock upon a lofty mountain,
 Sitting on it, a harlot loosely girt
 Was seen, her eyes in ready glances rolling ;
 And that she might not taken be from thence,
 I saw a giant standing by her side,
 And divers times did each the other kiss :
 But when a wanton and inviting eye
 On me she turned, that savage paramour
 Flogged her all over from the head to foot.
 Then full of jealousy and cruel rage,
 He loosed the monster, and drew it through the wood
 So far, that that alone became a shield
 To the harlot, and the new monstrosity.⁷

⁷ The Tree in the Garden of Paradise is here used as a type of the human race, as centred under the power of the Roman Empire. It is withered, but is restored to life by the work of Redemption, which is completed by the submission of Christ in his human nature to the temporal power of the Roman Empire ; and this may be considered as indicated by the binding of part of the car to the tree.—Christ ascends ; and the Church (the car) is left to the care of Theology, personated by Beatrice.—The attack of the eagle denotes the persecutions by the first emperors.—The fox may stand for Arius, or collectively for all the earlier heretics.—The feathering of the car is the temporal endowment of the Church by Constantine.—The carrying off of part of the Car by the dragon, probably signifies the separation of the Greek Church in the 9th century.—The further feathering denotes the increasing endowments of the Church, and especially that by the Countess Matilda.—The seven heads and ten horns are those of the Beast in the 17th chapter of Revelations, and must be taken to denote the later corruptions of the Church.—The harlot is Boniface 8th, and the giant is Philip the Fair, in allusion to their unholy alliance, and the subsequent outrage by Philip upon Boniface (Purg. xx. 86) : and the final withdrawal of the car, indicates the removal of the Papal Court from Rome to Avignon, in 1305.

CANTO XXXIII.

EUNOE.

"*Deus venerunt gentes*,"¹ in response
The three now, now the four, sweet psalmody,
Commenced the Ladies, and the while they wept :
And Beatrice all sighing and devout
Listened in such an attitude that scarce
Was Mary at the cross more sorrow-changed.
But when the other virgins gave her room
To speak, she rose and standing on her feet
Replied, suffused as with the colour of flame :
"A little while and ye shall see me not ;
And again, O my sisters well beloved,
Further a little while and ye shall see me."²

10

Before the seven then she placed herself ;
And after her by signs alone she led
Me and the Lady and the Sage³ who stayed.
Thus went she onwards, and not as I think
Was on the earth imprinted her tenth step,

¹ "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance, thy holy temple have they defiled." Ps. lxxix. 1.

² John xvi. 16.

³ Statius.

When with her eyes she did mine eyes encounter,
 And with a peaceful look : "Speed faster on ;"
 She said, "that while I shall converse with thee 30
 Thou mayst be better placed for listening."
 Soon, as in duty bound, I was by her,
 She spoke : "O brother, wherefore art afraid
 Question to make of me, now at my side ?"
 Like those, who in excessive reverence,
 Speak in the presence of superiors,
 And force no living accent through the teeth,
 Befel it me, for with no perfect sound
 Began I : "Lady, my necessity
 Thou knowest, also what for it is good." 35
 She then to me : "Of terror and of shame
 Henceforth my wish is that thou shouldst be rid,
 And talk no longer as a man that sleeps.
 Learn that the vessel, which the serpent broke,
 Was, and is not,⁴ but let the guilty know
 The vengeance of the Lord fears not the sop.⁵
 Shall not for all time be without an heir
 The eagle, who his plumes left in the car,
 Whence it grew monstrous, afterwards a prey : 40
 For I see certainly, and therefore speak ;
 Stars even now approach to bring a time,
 Secure against all obstacle or chance,
 In which five hundred, and twice five, and five ⁶
 Despatched from God shall slay the wanton woman,
 The giant also who divides her guilt.
 Haply it may be that my dark discourse,
 Like Themis or the Sphinx will not convince,

⁴ "The beast that was and is not." Rev. xvii. 11.

⁵ According to the prevailing superstition at Florence, a murderer was safe from vengeance, if he had eaten a sop of bread in wine, upon the grave of the slain man.

⁶ 500, 5, and 10, in Roman numerals, give the letters D, V, X ; and the coming of some great Imperial leader is predicted. In fact this is a repetition of the prophecy of In. i. 101.

For in their fashion is its meaning hid :
 But soon events will be the Naiades,
 To give the answer to this riddle deep, 50
 Without destruction of the herds and corn.⁷
 Mark thou ; and as from me thou hast received
 These words, do thou report to them who live
 In that life which a passage is to death ;
 And be thou mindful, as thou writest it,
 Not to conceal how thou hast seen the tree,⁸
 Which now these two times has been here despoiled.
 Whoever violates or plunders this,
 Offends God with a blasphemy indeed,
 Who made it holy for his use alone. 60
 For tasting this, in pain and in desire,
 Five thousand years and more the primal soul
 For him longed who that taste rued in himself.
 Thy reason slumbers if thou dost not note
 The special purpose, why of towering height
 • So great it is, and spreading at the top :
 And if had not, as Elsa's⁹ waters been
 The vain imaginations round thine heart,
 A Pyramus to the mulberry their joys ;
 Looking no further than these circumstances, 70
 The justice of God in the interdict,
 Of the tree morally, thou wouldst perceive :
 But since I know thee in thine understanding
 Altered to stone, and dyed to sinfulness,
 So that the light of my words dazzles thee,

⁷ In allusion to a passage in Ovid. Met. vii. 760.

⁸ The tree now more especially represents the Roman Empire, as the political centre (in Dante's creed) of the whole human race. In this phase of the allegory, the tying of the Car to the tree has signified the annexation of the Papedom to Rome ; and the removal of the Pope to Avignon, is made a blasphemous violation of a divinely appointed union, of the separate heads of temporal and spiritual power, in Rome. See In. ii. 20.

⁹ The water of the Elsa, which falls into the Arno, half way between Florence and Pisa, has a petrifying quality.

Further I would, that if not writ, yet figured
Within thee thou shouldst bear it, in the way
The pilgrim's staff, inwreathed with palm, reminds."

I then : " As is beneath the signet wax,
Which changes not the figure that is stamped, " "
So is my memory by thee impressed.
But why so high above my faculties
Soars thy discourse, so much by me desired,
Losing it more, the more they look for aid ? "
" That thou mayst understand," she said, " the school
Which thou hast followed, and its doctrine see
How little it accords with my discourse ;
And learn that your way is from the divine
Distant as far, as is apart removed
From earth the sphere that does the highest roll." " "
Then I replied : " I cannot recollect
Ever that I away from thee have strayed,
Nor have I in me a reproving conscience."
" And if indeed thou canst not recollect,"
Smiling she answered, " to thy mind recall
How on this day thou hast of Lethe drunk ;
And sure as fire may be inferred from smoke,
Clearly determines this forgetfulness
A fault in thine attention elsewhere lent.
Truly from this time forth shall be undraped " "
My speech to thee, so far as it is meet
To thy crude vision to discover it."

Both more resplendent and at slower pace
The sun was now on the meridian arc,
Which its position with the aspect shifts,
When to a halt came (as are wont to halt
They that as vanguard march before a squadron,
If on the route some novelty appear)
The seven Ladies, on a deep shade's edge

Such as beneath the green leaves and dark boughs ¹¹⁰
The Alps upon their icy torrents cast.
In front of these the Tigris and Euphrates
I saw, that seemed to issue from one source,
And like friends who to separate are loth.

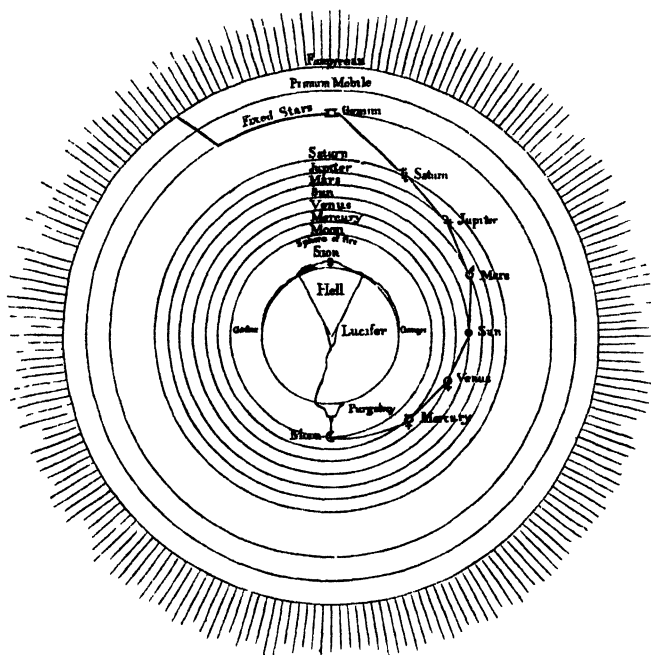
“ O Light, O Glory of the human race,
What is this water that is poured forth thus
From one spring, and diverges in its course? ”
To such prayer was returned to me : “ Entreat
Matilda to instruct thee ; ” then replied,
As one that from a fault himself absolves, ¹¹⁵
The Lady fair : “ This well as other things
Have been by me taught to him ; and I know
That Lethe’s waters have not this effaced.”
And Beatrice : “ Perchance some greater care,
Which oftentimes destroys the memory,
Has made his mental vision something dark.
But see where Eunöe is gushing forth ;
Conduct him to it, and as thou art wont,
Restore his powers that are languishing.”
Like as a gentle soul makes no excuse, ¹²⁰
But for its own another’s wishes takes
Soon as by gestures they are manifest ;
So after I by her had been received,
The Lady fair moved, and to Statius
Said courteously : “ Do thou with him advance.”

Reader, if I possessed a greater space
To write, in part at least I would have sung
Of that sweet draught which ne’er had been enough :
But because now completed are the sheets
Allotted to this second canticle, ¹²⁵
No further may I give the rein to art.
Back from this holiest water I withdrew
Refreshed in manner of the tender plants

That are renewed in their young foliage ;
Pure, and prepared for mounting to the stars.¹

¹ The time of action in the Purgatory commences with one day (beginning before it is light) and one night, which are passed at the base of the Mountain of Purgatory. Purgatory proper is entered on the following morning, and the second night is passed in the Fourth Circle. A third day is spent in traversing the remainder of Purgatory, and the night is passed in its Seventh Circle. The last indication of time is the noon of the fourth day.

PARADISE.



PARADISE.

CANTO I.

ASCENT THROUGH THE SPHERES OF AIR AND FIRE

THE glory of the One who moves the whole,
 Penetrates through the universe, and shines
 In one part more, and in another less :
 Within that heaven which of His light has most
 Have I been, and seen things which how to tell

He knows not, neither can, who thence descends ;
 Because as it approaches its desire ¹
 Our intellect to such a depth attains
 That recollection cannot follow it.
 But truly so much of the sacred realm 10
 As I could treasure up within my mind
 Henceforth will be the subject of my song.

O good Apollo, for this last emprise,
 Make me such vessel of thine excellence
 As thou wilt have to give thy wished for bays :
 So far as this, one summit of Parnassus
 Has been enough for me, but now with both
 I must proceed on my remaining task.
 Possess my bosom, and do thou breathe such notes,
 As that time when thou didst draw Marsyas 15
 From forth of the ensheathment of his limbs.
 O Divine Virtue, if thou lend thyself,
 So that I may make manifest the image
 Of the blessed realm impressed upon my mind,
 Me thou mayst see approach thy tree beloved
 Made worthy of my subject, and thyself,
 To crown me with a garland of its leaves.
 Father, so rarely ever gathers it
 Poet or emperor for triumphing
 (The fault and scandal of the human will) 20
 That the Peneian leaf should gladness bring
 To the rejoicing Delphic deity,
 Whenever any one for it does thirst.
 A little spark will kindle a great flame :
 And haply, following me in better strains,
 Some one may beg from Cyrrha ² a response.

¹ God pervades all things as the ultimate Sovereign Good, which all things desire to attain, and in attaining which the perfection of each consists.

² A city sacred to Apollo, at the foot of Parnassus.

By different portals rises to mankind
The universe's lamp; but from that one
In which four circles in three crosses meet,³
With better course, and more propitious stars 40
Conjoined, it issues, and the mundane wax
Tempers and forms to its own pleasure best.
This portal had made morning on that side,
And evening upon this side, and was bright
All of that hemisphere, the other dark;
When Beatrice upon the left hand side
I saw turned round, and gazing on the sun:
Never did eagle look so fixedly.
And as the reflex ray of light is wont
To issue from the first, and to rebound, 50
Like to a pilgrim who would home return;
So to her action, by the eyes infused
Into my fancy, mine became alike,
And on the sun I looked beyond man's use.
There, much is given which is here denied
To human faculties, thanks to the place
Created purposely for humankind.
Not long I bore it, yet for such a time,
That all around I saw a shower of sparks
Like those of iron glowing from the forge: 60
And suddenly it seemed that day to day
Was added, as if He who could do this
Had with another sun adorned the sky.
Beatrice stood with her eyes wholly fastened
On the eternal orbs, and I on her
Fixing mine eyes, from upward gaze withdrawn,
Became within me, from her aspect, such
As Glaucus⁴ did by tasting of the herb

³ When the sun rises at the Equinox, the equinoctial colure intersects the horizon, equator, and ecliptic in the same point, and forms a cross with each of those circles.

⁴ Ovid. Met. xiii. 945.

Which made him follow with the other sea-gods,
 To tell this superhuman change in words 70
 Is not allowed ; let this example serve
 Those for whom grace reserves experience.
 If then I merely were such as created ^b
 At first by thee, O Love that rul'st the sky,
 Thou knowest who hast raised me by thy light.
 Soon as the sphere, which thou by love for thee
 Dost eternize, and thou with harmony
 Dost tune and temper, my attention caught,
 So large a space of heaven seemed to glow
 With the sun's rays, that neither rain nor flood 80
 A lake so widely spread have ever formed.

The novelty of this great light and sound
 Excited me to wish to learn their cause,
 With more anxiety than felt before.
 Then she, who noted in what frame I was,
 To quiet in me my perplexity,
 Opened her lips, before I question made ;
 And she began : " Thou dost make dull thyself
 With false belief, so that thou dost not see
 What thou wouldst see, if thou wast freed from this,"⁶⁰
 On earth thou art not, as thou dost suppose :
 But lightning, flying from its natural place
 Speeds not so fast, as thou to it ^c hast come."
 If from my first doubt I was thus released,
 By these few words delivered with a smile,
 I was entangled by another soon,
 And said : " Contented have I now found rest
 In my chief wonder, but I wonder still
 How I through these light bodies' could ascend."
 Then she, with breathing of a pious sigh, 100

^b That is, in the flesh.

^c To the Sphere of Fire, the natural place of lightning.

⁷ The Sphere of Air, and the Sphere of Fire.

Her eyes upon me turned with such regard
As mother bends on her delirious son ;
And she began upon this wise : " All things
An order have in them ; this is the law
Which makes the universe conform to God.
In this the higher-creatures see the marks
Of the Eternal Power, which is the end,
For which this ordinance has been decreed.
Within the order, which I speak of, lie
All natures in their varied destinies, 110
Some nearer, others further from the Source ;
And hence they to their different ports proceed
(On the great ocean of existence, each
Impelled by its allotted appetite."
Thus one will carry fire towards the moon ;
One is the mover of the animal heart ;
Another gathers up and binds the earth :
And this bow does not only shape the flight
Of creatures which have no intelligence,
But also those with intellect and love. 120
The providence which framed those mighty laws,
With its own light keeps ever still the heaven,*
Within which turns the one of greatest speed :
And thither now, as to a destined site,
Transporteth us the power of that string
Which He that shoots draws to a joyful mark.
But truly, as the form will not accord
Oft times to the intention in the arts,
Because materials to respond are dull ;
So from this course allotted will diverge 130
Sometimes the creature, which the power has
To take, when tempted, to a different path

* See Note 1. p. 384.

⁹ The Empyrean Heaven, which is the immediate abode of God, is at rest ; but has within it, and next to it, the *Primum Mobile*, which, as the most distant, is the most rapid of the moving spheres.

(As oftentimes may be observed to fall
Fire from the clouds) when the first impetus
Is by false pleasure drawn aside to earth.

- No farther shouldst thou marvel, as I think,
At thine ascent than that a river should
From a high mountain seek the lower ground.
Marvel as great it were in thee, if freed
From obstacles thou hadst remained below,
As if on earth should living fire stay.”
Then to the heavens she returned her looks.

CANTO II.

THE FIRST SPHERE OR SPHERE OF THE MOON.—THE DARK AND
BRIGHT SPOTS OF THE MOON.

O YE who sailing in a little bark
To hear desirous, are now following
After my ship that voyages in song,
Return ye back towards your native shores ;
Venture not on the ocean, lest perchance
Ye in confusion losing me be left :
The waters that I plough were never crossed ;
Minerva breathes gales, and Apollo steers,
And the nine Muses point me to the Bears.

Ye others few, that have lift up the head 10
In time for bread of Angels, upon which
We feed on earth, and never surfeit comes,
May well adventure forth on the deep sea
Your vessel, ever keeping in my wake,
Before on either hand the waters close :
That glorious crew who far as Colchos sailed,
Were not so marvel-struck, as ye will be,
When they saw Jason to a ploughman turned.¹

¹ One of the conditions in the adventure of the Golden Fleece, was to tame, and plough with certain brazen-footed and fire-breathing bulls. Ovid. Met. vii. 118.

The innate and perpetual desire
 Of the celestial realm carried us 20
 Swift even as the heaven ye behold :
 Upward looked Beatrice, and I on her ;
 And in the time, in which a shaft is placed,²
 And from the detent is released, and flies,
 Arrived I found me, where a wondrous thing
 Attracted my regards to it ; and she
 From whom no thought of mine could be concealed,
 Turning towards me, beautiful as glad,
 Spoke thus : “ Direct thy grateful mind to God,
 Who to the first orb has transported thee.” 30

It seemed to me a cloud invested it,
 Solid, condensed, and smooth, and brilliant,
 Like to a diamond smitten by the sun.
 Within itself the everlasting pearl
 Received us, like as water does receive
 A ray of light, and yet entire remains.
 If I in flesh was—and on earth we know not
 How one dimension can another hold,
 Which must be so, if matter matter fills—
 A greater longing should within us burn 40
 That Essence to behold, in which is seen
 How God and our nature are united.
 Then will be known what we accept in faith,
 Not demonstrated, self existent known,
 Like the first truths in which a man believes.

I answered : “ Lady, as devotedly
 As most may be, to Him I render thanks,
 Who has conveyed me from the mortal world :
 But tell, I pray thee, what are the dark spots
 Upon this body, which below on earth 50
 Make some relate their foolish tales of Cain ? ”³

² In a cross-bow.

³ The Man in the Moon. In. xx. 126.

Something she smiled ; and then : "How goes astray,"
She said to me, "opinion in mankind,
Where'er cannot the senses' keys unlock !
Truly should not be lodged in thee the shafts
Of wonder now ; since trusting to the sense,
How short the flight of reason is, thou seest :
But tell me what thyself thou think'st on it."
'Then I : "This difference, as seen on high,
Is caused, I think, by matter rare and dense." 60
And she : "Thou wilt perceive how deep is plunged
In error thy belief, if thou wilt heed
The arguments against it which I bring.
For the eighth sphere exhibits numerous
Lights, which in size and in their quality
Of different aspect are to be observed.
If rare and dense alone effected this,
One single virtue in them all would be
Distributed, the same, or less, or more :
Differing powers must be the result 70
Of Formal Principles ; ' all these but one,
Following your reasoning, would be destroyed.

"Again, if of this darkness rarity
The cause were which you seek, then through and through,
Would in its mass be thus attenuated
This planet ; or in manner as divides
Its fat and lean a body, likewise this
Would in its volume alternate the leaves.
Suppose the first ; it would be manifest
In sun-eclipses, for then would shine through 80
The light, as when on other rare things thrown.
But this is not so ; therefore we must try
The other ; and if I can disprove that,

⁴ In the Scholastic Philosophy, the Formal Principle, or Formal Cause, is that by which one object is made to differ from others produced out of the same common matter.

The falsehood of your theory is shown.
 Granting then, that this rare does not pass through,
 There must be certain limits beyond which
 Its opposite will not let it extend ;
 And hence a foreign ray would be thrown back,
 Even as colours are returned through glass
 Which at the back of it has lead concealed. 90
 But you will say, that thus obscured is seen
 The ray in some more than in other parts,
 Because from deeper surfaces returned.
 From such an instance will deliver thee,
 If ever thou wilt try, experiment,
 The sole fount of the rivers of your arts ;
 Three mirrors take, and two of them remove
 To equal distance ; further off the third
 Between the two first let the eyes observe :
 Turning towards them, cause behind your back 100
 A lamp be placed, to light the mirrors three,
 And be reflected to you by them all :
 Then, although over a less space extends
 The furthest object, you will note of it
 That it is equally resplendent seen.

“ Now, as before the first attacks of heat,
 What lies below is of the snow laid bare,
 And of the frost and hue it showed at first ;
 Bared in the like manner thine intellect
 I would inform with such a brilliant light, 110
 As will in its effulgence on thee shine.
 Within the heaven ⁵ of the Peace Divine
 A body ⁶ rolls, within whose influence
 The existence lies of all which it contains.
 The heaven ⁷ which comes next with so many stars,

⁵ The Empyrean.⁶ The Primum Mobile.⁷ The Sphæræ of the fixed Stars.

'Mongst various beings this existence parts,
 Distinct from it, but in itself contained
 The other spheres * in their varieties,
 The difference, which is among them found,
 Apply to their fixed purposes and ends. 120
 On this wise move those organs of the world,
 Grade beneath grade, as now thou mayst observe,
 From above taking what they shed below.

“ Regard me earnestly, as I proceed
 Along this region to the truth you seek,
 So that hereafter you may pass alone.
 The power and motion of the sacred orbs,
 (As by the craftsman is the hammer's art,)
 Is by their blessed ministers inspired ;
 And that heaven glorious with so many lights, 130
 From the Deep Mind which guides its revolution,
 Its image fashions, and its impress takes :
 And as the soul within your mortal dust,
 In different members, and appropriate
 For various functions, finds development ;
 Thus does Intelligence its excellence
 Diffuse and multiply among the stars,
 Revolving upon its own Unity.
 Each different power holds in different league
 The precious body which it animates, 140
 To which, as life in mortals, it is bound.

“ From the blest nature whence it is derived
 A spreading virtue through this body shines,
 As joy is seen within the sparkling eye :
 And hence it is that between light and light,
 Difference is seen, and not from dense and rare ;

* The planet-bearing spheres of the Ptolemaic astronomy : viz., the spheres of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon.

This is the Formal Principle which makes
Conforming with its goodness, dark and light.”’

’ Beatrice proves, I. That *rare* and *dense* are not the reason of the different size and light of the stars.

II. That the lunar spots are not caused by an alternation of rare and dense strata; whether supposed to traverse the moon in its depth or breadth: for in the first case the sun would shine through it in an eclipse: and in the second its light would be uniformly reflected from the first stratum as from a looking-glass and there would be no variety of light and dark.

III. That the spots are not occasioned by the different brightness of the reflection of the sun from the surface of the moon, and from the bottom of deep cavities in the moon.

Then she shows, I. That the Empyrean sheds its Virtue on the Primum Mobile, the Primum Mobile its Virtue on the sphere of the fixed stars, and so on.

II. That this Virtue and the motion of each sphere are directed by a special presiding Intelligence in each.

III. That this Virtue, although it descends from one source, is not the same Virtue more or less communicated, but different; that is, differently adapted to the nature and end of the heavenly bodies, and hence productive of different effects also in their external appearance. Hence the dark and light in the moon do not depend upon any difference of density in its substance, but on the special virtue communicated to that planet which operates as a Formal Principle, or intrinsic cause, to determine its special mode of existence.

CANTO III.

THE MOON CONTINUED.—THE SOULS OF NUNS TORN FROM
THEIR VOWS.—PICCARDA.—CONSTANCE.

THE Sun, ' which erst with love inflamed my breast,
Had now to me unveiled of beauteous truth
The aspect fair, with proof such and disproof;
And I, corrected and convinced to own
Myself, as much as was for this required,
Lifted my head to speak to her erect.
But then appeared a sight, detaining me
To gaze upon it with such fixedness,
That straightway my confession I forgot.

As from transparent and bright plates of glass, ¹⁰
Or from off water that is clear and still,
Yet not so deep as that the ground is lost,
Reflected are the facial lineaments
So softened, that a pearl on a fair brow
Falls not more delicately on the eye:
Thus saw I many faces prompt to speak :
Whence into error contrary I ran
To that which caused love 'twixt the man ' and fount,
The instant, that I was aware of them,

¹ Beatrice.

² Narcissus, who mistook his image in the fountain for reality.

Regarding them as mirrored images.
I turned mine eyes to see whose they might be ;
But I saw no one, and again withdrew
Them turned direct on my sweet pilot's light,
Which shone in smiles within her sacred eyes.

"Because I smile, thou must not be surprised,"
She said, "considering your childish thought,
For still thy feet have not attained the truth,
But in vain lead thee round, as is their wont.
True substances are these on which you look,
For breach of vows to this place relegated.
But converse hold with them, and hear and know,
That the True Light, which gives to them content,
Suffers them not from Him to turn their steps."
Then to the shade, which readiest appeared
'To speak, addressing me, I thus began ;
Like to a man by his strong wish bewildered :

"O spirit blest create, that in the rays
Of the eternal life dost prove that joy,
Which, tasted not, surpasses understanding ;
Gracious it were to me, if thou wouldst tell
Thy name, and what has been thy destiny ;"
On which she ready and with beaming eye :
"Our affection closes not the gates
To righteous wishes, as does neither His
That would have all his court resemble Him.
When upon earth, I was a virgin nun ;
And if thy memory will itself review,
That I am fairer now will not conceal me ;
But thou wilt recognize me as Piccarda,
Who placed among these others that are blest,
Am blest within the tardiest of the spheres.
Our affections, which inflamed alone
Are at the pleasure of the Holy Spirit,

Rejoice as marshalled by his ordinance ;
And this our lot, so lowly that appears,
Assigned us was, because neglected were
Our vows, in some particular unobserved."

I then to her : " Upon thy wondrous face
Glistens, I know not what that is divine,
Which has transformed thee from thine earlier traits : "
Therefore was I not quick to recollect ;
But now assists me that which thou hast said,
So that remembrance easier is made.
But tell me : ye, that are in this place blest,
Do ye desire a more exalted place,
More to perceive, and more to be beloved ? "

Something on this the other shadows smiled ;
And then she answered me in such delight,
She seemed to glow with love of Fire Divine :
" Brother, within us regulates our wills
The power of Love, and causes us to wish
For only that we have, and seek nought else.
If we desired higher to be placed,
Then our desire would be at variance
With His will, who has here appointed us ;
Which in these spheres thou seest cannot be,
If here to exist in Love be necessary,
And if its nature thou wilt ponder well ;
For this blest state it is essential hence,
To the divine will to conform the thoughts,
That our wills together may make one :
So that as, throne below throne, we exist
Throughout this realm, to all the realm seems good,
As to the King who sways it by His will :
In following His pleasure is our peace ;
That is the ocean, into which flows all
Created by it, or by nature made."

Thus was it clear to me that every part
 Of heaven is Paradise, although the grace
 Of Highest Good on all rains not the same. 89
 But as will happen, when one viand cloy,
 Yet for another appetite remains,
 (The one declined, the other in request,)
 In gesture thus behaved I and in words,
 To gather from her what might be the web,
 Whose end she had not with the shuttle reached.

“ Her good life and high worth in heaven place
 Higher,” she said, “ a lady, ³ in whose rule
 Below on your earth they wear robes and veils ;
 So that until death they may watch and sleep 100
 With that Spouse who their every vow accepts,
 By love made in accordance with his will ;
 To follow her, a young girl, from the world,
 I fled, and in her habit was concealed,
 And of her order vowed to keep the way.
 Then did men, used to evil more than good,
 Tear me away from my beloved cell :
 God knows, what afterwards my life became.⁴
 That other splendour, which is manifest 110
 Upon my right side, and is lighted up
 With all the radiance of our heaven,
 What of myself I say, to her applies :
 She was a nun, and even so was torn
 From off her head the sacred wimple’s shade ;
 But after she was to the world restored
 Against her wishes, and ’gainst custom good,
 She never of the heart’s veil was deprived,

³ St. Clare, who founded the Order called after her, was born at Assisi, 1193, died 1253.

⁴ Piccarda was a Sister of the Order of St. Clare at Florence, and was violently taken from the convent, by her brother, Corso Donati, to be married. According to the legend, she prayed for death or disease, to save her virgin vows, and thereupon soon afterwards died of a leprosy.

This is the fulgence of that Constance^a great,
Who from the second pride of Suabia
Produced the third, its latest puissance ;”
Thus she addressed me ; and began then : “*Ave*
Maria,” singing ; vanishing in song,
As through the water sinks some heavy thing.

120

My vision, which for so long followed her
As it was possible, on losing her,
Turned to the standard of my greater love,
And wholly upon Beatrice was fixed ;
But she with such light burst on my regard,
As at the first the eye could not endure ;
And this made me more slow to question her.

^a Constance, daughter of Roger, king of Sicily, became a nun in her youth. Upon failure of male heirs to the crown, she was called from the cloister to marry the Emperor Henry 6th, (second of the house of Suabia) and became the mother of Frederick 2nd, the third and last Emperor of his line.



CANTO IV.

THE MOON CONTINUED —THE PLACE OF THE BLESSED -
HUMAN WILL

BETWEEN two viands distant and inviting
In equal mode, of famine first would die
A free man, ere of either he would eat :
So will a lamb stand 'twixt two appetites
Of savage wolves, in equal fear of each ;
And so will stand a dog between two deer.
Wherefore I blame me not, if I were mute,
Suspended in a manner by my doubts,
As unavoidable, nor yet commend.

Silent I was ; but painted was my wish
 Upon my face, and with it my request
 More vividly than if expressed by words.
 Became then Beatrice, what was Daniel,
 Nebuchadnezzar in his wrath appeasing,¹
 Which made him so unjustly barbarous.
 She said : " I understood how thee attracts
 One and the other want, so that thy wish
 Restrains itself, and cannot be expressed.
 If good remains my own will, you would argue,
 Why should the violence of other men
 Abridge the recompence of my deserts ?
 Occasions thee another source of doubt
 The soul's supposed returning to the stars,
 As held in the philosophy of Plato.
 These are the questions which upon thy wish
 Press forward equally ; and therefore first
 That will I handle which has venom most.

" The Seraphim the nearest raised to God,
 Moses, and Samuel, and either John,
 ('Take which thou wilt), I say—not even Mary—
 Have not their seats within a different heaven
 From these souls who just now to thee appeared,
 Nor in duration have years more or less ;
 But the first sphere² all render beautiful
 And diversely possess the blessed life,
 As more or less they feel the Eternal Breath.
 They show themselves here, not because assigned
 To them this orb is, but to indicate
 The sphere celestial which the least is raised.
 Thus must your understanding be addressed
 Because it only from the senses learns
 What for the reason it makes after fit.

¹ By explaining his dream.² The Empyrean.

The Scriptures, in like manner condescend
 To human faculties, and feet and hands
 Ascribe to God, but with another sense ;
 And Holy Church in man's similitude
 Gabriel and Michael represents to you
 As also him³ who did Tobias heal.

“ What in Timæus⁴ of the souls is said,
 Resembles not what here is to be seen,
 Because he means no other than he speaks.
 He says, the soul returns to its own star,
 Believing that from this it was detached,
 When nature gave to it an earthly form ;
 And haply this belief has other sense
 Than the words sound in, and this may be so
 With the intention not to be derided.
 But if he means that to these spheres return
 Their influences or for praise or blame,
 His bow may hit on something of the truth.
 This principle, ill understood, betrayed
 The whole world once so much, that Jupiter,
 And Mars, and Mercury it would invoke.

“ The other doubt which agitates thy mind,
 Has less of poison ; its ill tendency
 Cannot seduce thee far from me away.
 For, that our justice should appear unjust
 In human eyes, supplies an argument
 To faith, and not to evil heresy.
 But because able is thine understanding
 Fully to penetrate this verity,

³ The angel Raphael, Tobit, iii. 17.

⁴ In the system of the universe, as given by Plato in the *Timæus*, a soul is assigned at the creation to every star ; and the souls, who have lived well their appointed time on earth, are to return to their kindred stars, and there enjoy a beatified existence.

As you desire will I give content.
 If this be violence, when the sufferer
 Nothing consents to him that uses force,
 For this these spirits would not be excused ;
 A will, consenting not, is never quenched,
 But does as does the nature of a flame,
 Aside if put a thousand times by force ;
 Whence, if so little ever it inclines,
 It yields to force ; and thus have acted these, "
 With power to regain the holy place.
 Wholly entire had their will remained,
 As Laurence kept his on the gridiron,
 And Mutius,⁵ with the hand unflinching, his,
 Then to the course it would have them restored
 Whence they were driven, as they were when free ;
 But rare indeed is such an earnest will.
 And by this reasoning if entertained
 By thee as meet, an argument is crushed
 Which often might have given thee unrest. ""

" But now encounters thee another strait,
 Meeting thy vision, such that of thyself
 Escape thou couldst not, but wouldst sink oppressed.
 For certain have I on thy mind engraved,
 That no blest soul can ever falsehood speak,
 As being always near to the First Truth :
 Yet from Piccarda thou didst after hear
 That Constance kept her fondness of the veil,
 So that to contradict me here she seems.
 Ofttimes, my brother, has it so befallen, "
 That, to avoid some peril, 'gainst the will
 Has been that thing done, which ought not to be ;
 Like as Alcmæon,⁶ who to this besought

⁵ St Laurence in his martyrdom, and Mutius Scaevola with his hand in the fire before Porsena.

⁶ See Note 5, p. 260.

By his own father, his own mother slew,
For duty's sake thus most undutiful.
And at this point I would you should reflect
How will with duress joins, and they become
Such, that they cannot justify the crime.
Perfect free choice to evil will not yield ;
But only so far, as it apprehends
A worse calamity if it refuse.
Therefore, when of this thing Piccarda spoke,
Perfect free choice she understood, and I
The other, so that both of us spoke truth."

110

Such was the influx of the holy stream
Which issuing from the fount whence all truth flows,
Thus laid in peace my one and other wish.
"O loved by the First Love, O heavenly one,"
Said I, in sequence, "whose speech waters me
And fosters, giving more and more of life,
All my affection not so deep extends
As would suffice to render thee fit thanks ;
But He, who sees and can, will this repay.
Well know I that can ne'er sufficient be
Our intellect, unless lit by the Truth,
Apart from which no true thing can exist.
It rests in it as in its lair a beast,
When it attains it, and to it can reach ;
If otherwise, in vain were every wish.
From this springs up, in manner of a shoot,
Doubt at truth's foot, and this is nature's law
To the top urging us from steep to steep.
Invites me this, secure this renders me
With reverence, Lady, of thee to demand
Another truth which is to me obscure.
I wish to learn if man can satisfy
Deficient vows in such wise by good works
That in your balance they may not seem nought."

120

11

Beatrice looked on me with eyes that brimmed
With radiance of love, and so divine, 140
That with spent faculties I bowed the reins,
And almost swooned, with eyes all lowly sunk.

CANTO V.

THE NATURE OF VOWS.—ASCENT TO THE SECOND SPHERE, OR
SPHERE OF MERCURY.—THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO HAVE
BEEN RIGHTEOUS IN ACTIVE LIFE.

“ If I inflame thee with the fire of love
Beyond the measure that on earth is seen,
So that I quell the power of thine eyes,
Be not at this surprised ; for it proceeds
From the perfected sight, which as it learns,
Closer advances thus towards the Good.
Well can I note too how already shines
Within thine intellect the Eternal Light,
That kindles love, if only it be seen ;
And if ought different entice thy love,
It is no other than some trace of this
Ill understood, which does from hence shine through.
You wish to learn if by another service
For broken vows requital can be made
Which will preserve the soul from punishment.”

Opens the canto thus with Beatrice ;
And like to one that stints not in discourse,
Thus she proceeded in her sacred words :
“ The greatest gift which in his bounty God
Creating made, and to his excellence

The most conformed, and what he most esteems,
Was that emancipation of the will,
With which the creatures of intelligence
All, and they only, were and are endowed.
Reasoning from this, will now to thee appear
The great worth of a vow, if so assumed,
That God consents to it, as you consent ;
For to confirm the pact 'twixt God and man,
An offering is of that treasure made,
Described above, and made by man's own act. 40
What can be paid then as equivalent ?
If you think what was offered to use well,
'Twould be to do good with ill gotten gains.

“ Now art thou in the greater point informed ;
But since from vows dispenses Holy Church,
Which seems against the truth which I have shown,
At table something longer must thou sit,
Because the hard food of which thou hast eaten,
For its digestion some assistance needs.
Open thy mind for what I shall unfold, 40
And inwards stablish it ; no knowledge gives
Mere listening, unless it be retained.

“ Two things together join to constitute
This sacrifice ; the one of them is that
Of which it is ; the other is the pact.
The latter never can be satisfied,
But by performance, and concerning this
Precisely has it been above laid down :
Upon the Hebrews therefore was enjoined
Some sacrifice, although the offering, 40
As thou must recollect, might varied be.¹
The former, as the subject-matter known,

¹ As in Levit. xii. 8.

May well be anything, if not deficient,
 When for another subject put in place.
 But let not change the load upon his back
 Any at his own will, without the turn
 Of the two keys,² the silver and the gold ;
 And every change thou mayst regard as nought,
 If the preferred, to the abandoned thing
 Proportion bears not, as does six to four :
 But where the thing so much preponderates
 In value, that it outweighs every scale,
 By other charge it cannot be redeemed.

“ Lightly their vows let mortals not assume ;
 Be faithful, yet not inconsiderate,
 As Jephthah was in his first offering ;
 Who rather should have said : I have done ill !
 Than keeping it do worse ; and thus unwise,
 Thou mayst remember, was the Grecian chief,
 When her fair face Iphigenia mourned,
 And for her made lament both wise and fools,
 Who hear the story of that sacrifice.
 Ye Christians in your motions be more grave ;
 Resemble not a feather in the wind,
 Neither believe ye that all waters cleanse.³
 Ye have the Old and the New Testament,
 And for your guide the Shepherd of the Church :
 Let these for your salvation be enough.
 If evil passion calls you elsewhere,
 Be men, and not insensate animals,
 So that the Jews among you, may not scoff.
 As the lamb be not, that deserts the milk
 Of his own dam, in simple wantonness
 For his own pleasure with himself to sport.”

² Purg. ix. 117.

³ “ Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel ? may I not wash in them and be clean ? ” 2 Kings, v. 12.

To me thus Beatrice, as now I write ;
Then all in eagerness she turned her round
To that part where most living is the world.⁴
Her silence and her altered countenance
Imposed a check upon my ardent wish,
Fresh questions that already had prepared, 90
And like an arrow that upon the mark
Strikes, ere the string from quivering has ceased,
So to the second kingdom did we fly.

I saw so radiant the Lady mine
When in the brightness of this heaven she plunged,
That from her did the planet grow more bright :
And if the star itself was changed and smiled,
What became I, that by my nature's law
Am made susceptible of every change !
As in a fish-pool, that is clear and still, 100
The fishes haste to what without is seen,
Supposing it may be for them some food ;
Thus did I see a thousand splendences
Approaching us, and each was heard to say :
" Behold one that will multiply our love !"
And as to us each one of them drew near,
The spirit full of joyfulness was seen
By the clear fulgence from it issuing.

Ponder, O Reader, if what here begins
Had gone no further, how thou must have felt 110
Painful desire somewhat more to learn ;
And from thyself thou mayst judge, how from these
I longed to know what their condition was,
As to mine eyesight they became disclosed.

" O happy born, to whom to see the Thrones
Of the Eternal Triumph grace concedes,

⁴ Looking upwards to the Empyrean Heaven.

Before thy state of militance is left ;
With that light, which through all the heavens spreads
Are we illumined ; therefore if thou wish
To learn concerning us, thy wish fulfil." 120
Thus by a pious spirit of that hand
Was spoken : and by Beatrice : " Speak, speak
Securely, and confide in them as Gods."

/ " Plainly I see that thou art in the nest
Of thine own light, and from thine eyes it beams,
By which it flashes forth, when thou dost smile ;
But who thou art I know not, nor why hast
O honoured soul, the station of that sphere *
Which is to mortals veiled by other rays : "
Thus spoke I, turning me toward the light
Which first addressed me ; whereon it became
More luminous far than it before had been,
Like to the sun, when he conceals himself
In light excessive, when the heat has pierced
The tempering of the exhalations thick ;
From me in joy increasing was concealed
The holy form in its own radiance ;
And close enveloped gave me in reply
What in the following canto will be sung.

* Mercury, least seen of all the planets, from its proximity to the Sun.



CANTO VI.

JUSTINIAN.—HISTORY OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.—ROMEO.

“ WHEN Constantine¹ had turned the eagle back
Against the course of heaven which followed it
After that ancient who Lavinia won,
Two centuries and more the bird of God

¹ Constantine in transferring the seat of government from Rome to Byzantium, carried the Eagle from West to East, which Æneas had borne from East to West (along with the sun) when he left Troy to found the Roman Empire.

On the extremest verge of Europe dwelt,
Near to those mountains whence at first it rose;
And underneath the shade of sacred wings
Governed the world there, passed from hand to hand,
And so alternating, came into mine.
I am Justinian, and was Emperor,
Who bid by the First Love, which now I feel,
Retrenched the vain and the redundant laws;²
And ere I was engaged upon this work
In Christ one nature only, and no more,
Believed I, and was in this faith content;
But blessed Agapetus, who was then
The highest Pastor, to the Faith sincere
Direction gave me by his arguments.³
In him I trusted; and what he advanced
I now see clearly, even as one sees
In every contradiction, true and false.
Soon as I moved my footsteps with the Church
It pleased God to inspire me in his grace
With the high task, and all to him I gave;
Arms to my Belisarius I left,
To whom was heaven's right hand so conjoined,
As was a token that I might repose.

“Thus to thy first enquiry is applied
Mine answer; but the shape which it assumed,
To follow it a certain space compel,
That with what reason thou mayst understand
Against the sacred emblem it is moved
As well by them who claim it, as oppose.
Reflect what valour has made worthy this
Of reverence, beginning from the hour

² In allusion to Justinian's reforms of the Roman code.

³ According to some of the ecclesiastical historians, Justinian at one time favoured the Eutychian heresy, which denied Christ's human nature, until convinced of its error by Pope Agapetus.

When Pallas⁴ died to give it sovereignty :
Thou know'st it held in Alba its abode
Three hundred years and more until the end
When again fought for it the three and three.⁵
Thou know'st its actions from the Sabines' loss
Down to Lucretia's woe, by seven kings
Around subduing all the neighbour states ;
Thou know'st its deeds when carried against Brennus
And against Pyrrhus by illustrious Romans,
Against the other princes and allies ;
Torquatus hence, and Quintius, from his locks
Neglected named,⁶ the Decii, and Fabii,
Obtained the fame which gladly I embalm.
This bore to earth the Arab's insolence,
Who in the train of Hannibal did cross
The Alpine range which thou, O Po, dost wash.
Beneath this, triumphs in their youth obtained
Pompey and Scipio, and this to the hill
Under which thou wast born, was sternly shown.⁷
Then, near the time when Heaven decreed all
The world to bring back to the ways of peace,
Cæsar assumed it at the will of Rome.
And what from Var to Rhine it did achieve
Iser and Aar saw, and saw the Seine,
And all the vallies whence the Rhone is filled.
What it performed when it Ravenna left
And crossed the Rubicon, was such a flight
That neither tongue nor pen can follow it.
To Spain it did conduct its followers,
Then to Dyrrachium, and Pharsalia smote
So that the hot Nile the disaster felt.
Antandros and Simois, whence it marched,

⁴ Son of Evander, and the ally of Æneas in his war against Turnus.

⁵ The Horatii and Curiatii.

⁶ Cincinnatus.

⁷ Fœsulæ was destroyed by the Romans, after the defeat of Catiline.

Revisited, and where is Hector laid,
And ill for Ptolemy again it moved.
Thence upon Juba with its lightning bore ;
Back then again it turned it to your west,
Where it the sound of Pompey's trumpets caught.

"For what with its next bearer it achieved,
Brutus and Cassius down in Hell bewail,
And smarted Modena and Perugia.
Next, mournful Cleopatra for it wept,
Who flying from its presence, with the asp
Contrived a sudden and a dreadful death.
With him to the Red-sea shore it advanced ;
With him the world to such peace it reduced,
That Janus was within his temple shut.

"But what this emblem, that now makes me speak,
Before had done, and after was to do
In the earth's kingdom to it subjected,
Appears ignoble and of little worth
When in the hand of the third Cæsar^a seen
By vision clear, and with affection pure ;
For that Living Justice which inspires me,
Conceded to it while in this one's hand,
The glory to take vengeance for his wrath.
And now prepare to marvel at my words :
With Titus afterwards it vengeance^b took
Upon that vengeance for the primal sin.
And when the teeth of Lombards did attack
The Holy Church, beneath the wings of this
Came Charlemagne victorious to her aid.

"Judgment thou mayst now upon those conclude,
Whom I above accused, and on their crimes

^a Tiberius, under whom Christ was crucified.

^b The destruction of Jerusalem

That are the cause of all your miseries.
 One the gold lilies' 'gainst the public flag 100
 Sets up, the other takes it for his own,
 Which sins the most hard were it to decide.
 Their objects let the Guibelines pursue
 Under another flag ; ill follow this
 They who from justice aye would sever it :
 And let not the new Charles * this overthrow
 With his Guelfs ; but the talons let him fear
 That from a greater lion have stripped the hide.
 Often ere now the sons have had to mourn
 The fathers' crimes ; and let him not believe 110
 That for his lilies God will change the day.

“ This lesser planet is made beautiful
 By those good spirits who have active been
 In the pursuit of honour and of fame ;
 And since to these their wishes were inclined
 Thus deviously, it follows that the rays
 Of the True Love less bright on them incline :
 But the proportionment of our reward
 To our deserts is part of our delight,
 Because we know it as nor less nor more. 120
 Hence Living Justice so much gratifies
 Our affections in us, that they never can
 Be warped from henceforth to iniquity.
 Differing voices a sweet music form ;
 And thus the differing orders in our life
 Make a sweet harmony among these spheres.

“ Inclosed within this present margarite
 The brightness of Romeo shines, to whom
 His good and great work was ill recompensed :
 But the Provençals, who against him wrought, 130

¹ The banner of France.

² Charles 2nd. king of Naples. the son of Charles of Anjou.

Enjoyed no laugh ; and badly walks that man
Who finds an injury in benefits.
Four daughters had, and each of them a queen,
Raymond Berenger, and this brought about
The pilgrim Romeo of low estate ;
Afterwards moved him envious advice
To bring this upright person to account,
Who rendered to him seven and five for ten,
And thence departed poor and in old age ;
And had the world known what a heart he kept, ¹⁴⁰
By mouthfuls begging for his daily bread,
Daily it would have praised him, and would praise."³

³ According to G. Villani (vi. 90), Romeo, for some time minister to Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence (who died 1245), arrived at his court as a simple pilgrim returning from the shrine of St. James of Galicia. By his management and policy, his master's revenues were increased, and his four daughters were married to four kings ; namely, St. Louis, king of France ; Henry 3rd of England ; Richard, Earl of Cornwall, king of the Romans ; and Charles of Anjou, king of Naples and Sicily. The jealousy of the Provençal nobles procured his dismissal ; when he asked for his mule, his pilgrim's staff, and his scrip, and he departed as poor as he came, and was seen no more.

CANTO VII.

THE FALL OF MAN —THE SCHEME OF REDEMPTION —THE
RESURRECTION

*“ Osanna sanctus Deus Sabaoth,
Superillustrans claritate tua
Felices ignes horum malahoth ! ”*¹

Thus, to his orbit as he back returned,
As to me seemed it, did this being chant,
On whom was multiplied a double light ;
It and the others in their dance proceeded,
And like to sparks in their most rapid flight,
From me were suddenly in distance veiled.
I was in doubt, and, “ Speak, O speak,” I said
Within me, to the Lady mine, “ O speak,”
She who my thirst relieves with her sweet dew ;
But that observance which has mastery
Entirely o’er me at her very name,
Subdued me like a man by slumber seized.
Not long in such wise left me Beatrice,
But spoke, and beamed upon me with a smile,
That would a man make happy in the flames.

¹ “ Hosannah! holy God of Sabaoth,
Who with thy brightness dost illuminate
The beatific fires of these kingdoms.”

“ As known to me by my unfailing ken,
Justly in what manner a vengeance just 20
Punished can be, now occupies thy mind ;
But shortly for thee will I solve this thought :
And be thou most attentive, for my words
With gift of lofty matter will enrich.

“ Because on his Free Will would not endure
Reins (for his good), the man that was not born,²
Himself condemning, all his race condemned ;
From whence the human species lay sick
On earth in grievous sin for many an age,
Till to come down it pleased the Word of God, 30
What time the nature, which from its Creator
Was parted, He in his own person joined
By the sole act of his eternal love.

“ Now to this argument direct your mind :
This nature to its Maker thus conjoined,
Was good and faultless when at first created ;
And by its own act only was expelled
From Paradise, because it swerved aside
Out of the way of truth, and its own life.
Therefore the penalty upon the Cross, 40
If to the borrowed nature it were meted,
Never so justly did on any fall ;
And equally was nothing so unjust,
If we regard the person suffering,
In whom that nature was exhibited.
Therefore from one act issued different things ;
For the same death pleased God, and pleased the
Jews :
Trembled the earth for it, and heaven opened.
Henceforward therefore it should not perplex,

² Adam.

When it is told thee that a righteous vengeance
Was afterwards avenged by a just court.

“ But I perceive now that thy mind is bound,
From thought to thought advancing, in a knot
Of which it eagerly solution waits.
You say : What I have heard I understand ;
But it is hidden from me why God willed,
Upon this manner our redemption.
This purpose, O my brother, buried lies
From eyes of all of them, whose intellect
Has not grown adult in the flame of Love.
Yet because on this thing miraculous
There is much wondered, little understood ;
Why this the worthiest mode was I will tell.

“ The Divine Goodness that casts out from it
All enviousness, as it burns, sparkles forth
So that eternal beauties it displays.
What without intervention from this flows,
Is without end, because is not disturbed
Its image, when its signet is impressed :
What without mediation springs from this,
Is wholly free, as not being subjected
To influence of secondary things.
Conforms this most to it, and pleases most ;
For the blest Ardour, which on all things streams,
In things most like it, is most luminous.
In all these his pre-eminence obtains
The human creature ; and if one be lost,
From his nobility he must descend.
It is sin only which disfranchises,
And makes it unlike to the Highest Good,
Whence too it shines too little with its light ;
Nor can it to its dignity return

Unless what sin has taken it restores
With righteous penalty for evil joys.

“ Entirely when your nature had transgressed
In its beginning, from this dignity,
As well as Paradise, it was removed ;
Nor could recover it, if you reflect
Upon it well, in any other way,
Than by the passing one of these two fords :
Either God in his graciousness alone,
Might have forgiven ; or man by himself
Might have wrought satisfaction for his crime.

“ Strain now thy sight to penetrate the abyss
Of the Eternal Counsel, much as may be,
Keeping it steadfast, fixed on my discourse.
In his own limits was not able man
To satisfy ; so low he could not stoop,
Humble in subsequent obedience,
As disobeying he aspired to soar ;
And this the reason is for which was man
Disqualified to make his own amends.
By his own ways remained it then for God,
Back to his perfect life to ransom man,
Or by the first, or by the two conjoined.
But because every work more gratifies
Its worker, the more closely it presents
The goodness of the heart from whence it springs,
So Divine Excellence, that stamped the world,
To operate by both of its two ways,
Determined, when it raised it up again ;
Nor from the first day to the final night,
So lofty and so glorious a work
By one or other was or will be done.
For God was nobler when himself he gave,
To make man able to redeem himself,

Than had he pardoned of himself alone.
And all the other ways had not sufficed
To render justice, if the Son of God
Had not been humble to assume the flesh.

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“ Now to complete thee in thy every wish,
Return I to throw light upon one place,
That thou, as I do, mayst this comprehend.
You say : I see the fire, I see the air,
The earth, the water and their combinations
Run to corruption, and short time endure ;
And yet not less are these created things ;
Wherefore if that which I have said be true,
These from corruption ought to be exempt.

“ The Angels, brother, and the perfect realm
In which thou art, may be described as made,
As they exist, in their entire being ;
But all the elements which you have named,
And substances which of them are composed,
By a creative virtue have been formed.
Created was the matter whence are these ;
Created was their virtue formative
In these spheres which around them circulate.
The soul of every animal, and plant
By its potential quality attracts
The rays and motion of the sacred lights :
But without middle means inspires our life
The Highest Goodness, filling it with love
For it, and this it ever after seeks.
And from this further there may be explained
Your resurrection, if you will reflect
How human flesh was at that time created,³
When were produced the primal parents twain.”

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³ Namely, by the direct act of God.

CANTO VIII.

THE THIRD SPHERE, OR SPHERE OF VENUS.—THE SOULS OF
THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THIS
STAR ON EARTH.—CHARLES MARTEL.—THE DESTINIES OF
MEN.

THE world, what time it was in peril, thought
That the fair Cypriote upon wanton love
Shone, as she wheels in the third epicycle ;
And hence to her not only honour gave
Of sacrifices and of votive prayers
The elder nations in their ancient sin ;
But honoured also Cupid and Dione,
Her as her mother, and him as her son,
And told how Cupid sat in Dido's lap ; ¹
And from her, with whom now I have begun, ¹⁰
They took the appellation of the star,
Seen by the sun in front now, now behind him. ²

I noted not how into this I rose ;
But of my being there gave ample faith
The Lady mine, as she more fair became.
And as within a flame are sparkles seen,
And like as is distinguished voice from voice,
When one is held, the other comes and goes,

¹Æneid. i. 718.

² Venus—sometimes a morning, and sometimes an evening star.

Within this light I noted other lights
 Moving in orbs at more or lesser speed,
 Measured, I think to their Eternal Sight.²
 The winds descend not from a chilling cloud,
 Or seen or not, with such rapidity,
 But to be lame and slow they would appear,
 Compared to that with which these lights divine
 Seemed to approach us, as they left the sphere
 By the high Seraphim³ moved primally;
 And after them that forwardest were seen,
 "Hosannah" sounded, so that from that time
 Again to hear it I ne'er lost the wish.

Then one of them more closely to us came,
 And thus began alone: "We all are prompt
 To do thy will, that thou in us mayst joy.
 Here with the heavenly Princes' we revolve,
 In one desire, in one orb and motion,
 To whom on earth already thou hast said:
 '*Ye whose intelligence the third sphere moves;*'⁴
 And are so full of love, that thee to please,
 Repose to us will no less sweet appear."

Soon as mine eyes their homage had performed
 Unto my Lady reverently, and she
 Content and certified had rendered them,
 Back to the light they turned whose promises
 Had been so great, and with "Who art thou?" was
 My voice imprinted in affection strong.
 O how I noted that it glowed and spread
 In new delight that in it multiplied,

² According to the degree in which they enjoy the Beatific Vision.

³ The Primum Mobile is moved by the Seraphim, and its motion is communicated through the intervening spheres to that of Venus.

⁴ The charge of the Third Sphere is given to the Principalities of the Hierarchy of heaven. Pa. xxviii. 125.

⁵ The first line of the first canzone in Dante's Convito.

As I was speaking, on its former joy! .
 In this state spoke he : ' " Me the world possessed
 Below short space, and had it longer been, 20
 There had been less of evil to befall.
 Hid from thee keeps me my beatitude
 Which radiates around, inshrouding me,
 Like to the creature swathed in its own silk.
 Well didst thou love me, and for reasons good ;
 For had I stayed on earth, I would have shown thee
 The fruit of love and not alone its leaves.
 The country that is washed on the left hand
 By Rhone, which ere then with the Sorgue has mixed,
 Expected I should be one time its lord ; 30
 And that horn of Ausonia built with towns
 At Bari, Gaeta, and at Crotona,
 Whence Tronto falls into the sea, and Verdé.⁷
 Glittered already on my brows the crown
 Of that land which the Danube irrigates,
 After its German boundaries it has left ;
 And fair Trinacria (that is darkened ⁸ o'er,
 On the bay 'twixt Pachino and Peloro,
 That has its most annoyance from the east,
 Not from Typhœus, but the sulphur's birth) 70
 Obedient would be beneath its kings
 Through me, from Rudolf and from Charles descended,
 If evil rule, which ever aggravates

⁷ Charles Martel, grandson of Charles of Anjou, and eldest son of Charles 2nd of Naples, by the daughter and heiress of Stephen 5th, king of Hungary. He married Clemenza, daughter of the Emperor Rudolf, and was crowned king of Hungary, in his father's lifetime, but died before him in 1295, in which year he was at Florence, where Dante probably became acquainted with him. He describes the territories to which he would have succeeded—1, Provence. 2, The kingdom of Naples. 3, Hungary. 4, Sicily.

⁸ The three towns roughly denote the sea-coast boundary of the kingdom of Naples ; and the rivers Tronto, and Verdé (the modern Garigliano. *Purg.* iii. 181), mark its division from the northern states of Italy.

⁹ By the smoke of Ætna ; under which Typhœus was imprisoned by Jupiter. *Ovid. Met.* v. 846.

The people who live under it, had not
 Palermo forced to cry : 'To death, to death.'¹
 And if my brother² this could have foreseen,
 The grasping poverty of Catalonia
 He would have shunned, and thus had not offended ;
 For truly needful is it to provide,
 With him as well as others, that the ship
 Should not be laden more than it can bear.
 His nature, that penurious from a free
 Descended, of such officers had need
 As in their coffers loved not to amass."

"Because I think that the exceeding joy
 Which thy discourse pours on me, O my lord,
 In that place, where all good begins and ends,
 Is seen by thee, as it is seen by me,³
 More grateful is it ; and I value it,
 Because thou seest it looking upon God.
 Glad hast thou made me ; also make me clear,
 Since thy discourse has raised in me a doubt,
 How from sweet seed a bitter thing can grow ?"

Thus I to him ; and he to me : " Could I
 Explain one truth, on what thou dost request
 'Thine eyes might rest, as now is turned thy back.
 The Good, which all the realm you now ascend
 Gladdens and turns, a power makes to be
 His providence within these mighty orbs ;
 And not only are natures pre-ordained
 Within the Mind all perfect in itself,

¹ At the Sicilian Vespers in 1282.

² Robert, brother of Charles Martel, (who succeeded to the crown of Naples in 1309) had been for some time a hostage in Catalonia, and is reproached with bringing a train of needy officers from thence.

³ The joy which the soul of Charles Martel, in its beatified powers, sees in the Source of all good, is seen by Dante as manifested in Charles Martel.

But their continuance also is devised.
 Therefore whatever from this bow is shot
 Alights as ordered for its destined end,
 Like as an arrow to its aim⁸ exact.
 If otherwise, the heaven which you tread
 Its influence in such wise would exert,
 That there would be confusion, and no art ;
 Nor could this be, unless the intellects
 Which move the spheres were insufficient found, ¹¹⁰
 And the First wanting in perfecting these.
 Wouldst thou this truth should more illumine thee?"

Then I : " No more ; I see it cannot be
 That nature in what needful is should fail."
 He then again : " Confess, would it be worse
 For man on earth, if not a citizen ?"
 " Yes," I replied ; " and here I ask not why."
 " And can this be, unless on earth he lived
 With varied duties and with differences ?
 No ; if thy master⁴ well of this has writ." ¹²⁰
 Thus arguing at this point he arrived ;
 And then concluded : " Therefore different
 Must be the origins of these effects.
 Whence one is born a Solon, one a Xerxes,
 And one Melchisidek, one such as he⁵
 That lost his son, while flying through the air.
 The nature circular which is the seal
 To mortal wax, its function well performs,
 But between houses no distinction makes :
 Thus happened it that Esau was diverse ¹³⁰
 In kind from Jacob ; and Quirinus⁶ came
 Of sire so low, he was ascribed to Mars.
 The generated nature its own path

⁴ Aristotle, Polit. iii. 2.

⁵ Deedalus ; put for the Philosopher : the Statesman, the Soldier, and the Priest being indicated by the previous names.

⁶ Romulus.

Like to the fathers' ever would pursue,
Unless o'erruled by Providence Divine.

“ Now, that which was behind thee, is before ;
But that thou mayst know that thou givest joy,
I will complete thee with a corollary :
Ever the nature that a destiny meets
Discordant to it, like to every seed 140
Out of its climate, comes to evil proof.
And if the world below would keep in mind
The principles which nature has impressed,
Following her, a good breed it would have.
But to religious life ye wrest aside
The man born to be girded with the sword,
And make a king of him that should have preached ;
Hence are your footsteps out of the true way.”

CANTO IX.

VENUS CONTINUED.—CUNIZZA.—FOICO.—RAHAB

AFTER thy Charles, O beautiful Clemenza,
Had thus enlightened me, he told the wrongs
'That his posterity¹ must undergo ;
But said : " Be silent ; let the years roll on ; "
Whence only may I tell, that misery
Deserved will follow on your injuries.
And now the spirit of that holy light
Returned unto the sun whence it is filled,
As to that Good which all things satisfies.

Ah ! foolish souls, deceived and impious,
That from this Good your hearts make go astray,
Directing all your thoughts to vanity !
And lo ! another of those shining ones
Approached me, and its wish to do me grace
Signified by its splendour outwardly.
The eyes of Beatrice that were steadfast fixed
Upon me, as before, with sweet assent
To my desire gave me her approval.

" Give to my wishes an acquittance swift,"
I said, " O blessed soul, and proof afford

¹ Carlo Roberto, or Carobert, the son of Charles Martel, was excluded from the succession by his uncle Robert.

That unto thee my thoughts I can reflect.”
 On this the light, as yet to me unknown,
 From out the depth, whence it before had sung,
 Spoke as to one in pleasing whom it joyed :
 “ Within that region of the wicked land
 Of Italy, that lies ’twixt the Rialto
 And Brenta’s and Piava’s fountain head,
 Rises a hill, which no great height attains,
 From which descended at one time a torch²
 That to the plain great devastation bore.
 Both it and I were born of the same root ;
 Cunizza was I named, and here I shine,
 Because by this star’s rays I was subdued.
 But in myself I pardon with delight
 The occasion of this lot, nor grieves it me ;
 Which to your vulgar may seem marvellous.

“ Of this effulgent and most precious gem³
 In our heaven, which to me is nearest,
 Great fame remains, and ere it pass away,
 This hundredth year five times will have recurred ;
 Learn thus that man should strive for excellence,
 So that his first life may a second leave :
 Of this consider not the present crowd⁴
 Whom Tagliamento and Adige bound,
 Nor in affliction have repented yet.
 Soon will it fall that Padua at the marsh
 Will dye the water that Vicenza laves,
 Because its people fiercely strive with right.”

² Ezzelino ; the tyrant of the Trevigiano, (In. xii. 110) who was brother to Cunizza. The situation of Romano, the seat of his family, is indicated ; the Rialto being put for Venice.

³ Folco of Marselles ; a celebrated troubadour-poet, and afterwards bishop of Marselles.

⁴ The inhabitants of the Trevigiano.

⁵ The defeats of the Paduans, by Can Grande, as head of the Guibeline league, at Vicenza, in 1314, and twice afterwards, are foretold. The Bacchiglione is marshy near Vicenza.

And where Cagnano with the Silé meets,
 One⁶ lords it now, and bears a lofty head,
 For taking whom the web is ere now spun.
 Also the treason Feltro will lament
 Of its ungodly Pastor,⁷ so deformed
 That for the like to Malta⁸ enter none.
 Exceeding measure must that vessel be,
 Which of the Ferrarese could hold the blood,
 And wearied he that weighed it ounce by ounce,
 Which by this gentle prelate was bestowed
 To show his partizanship ; and such gifts
 Will be accordant with that country's use.
 Above are mirrors, which ye have called Thrones,
 Reflected whence to us is God in judgment,
 So that these sentences are seen as true."⁹

Here she was silent, and to me it seemed
 She turned to other matters, by the wheel
 On which she entered as she was at first.
 The other Joy, that now to me was known,
 Became a thing most glorious to behold,
 Like a fine ruby smitten by the sun:
 { Brightness in heaven is acquired by joy
 { As smiles are upon earth ; but glooms in hell,
 (The outward shadow, as the soul is sad.

" God can see all, and thy sight enters Him,"
 Said I, " O blessed spirit, so that none
 Of his resolves from thee can be concealed.
 Wherefore thy voice then, which the heavens delights,
 Ever in chanting with those blessed Flames⁹

⁶ Riccardo da Camino, lord of Treviso, murdered in 1312.

⁷ The Bishop of Feltro, who gave up to slaughter, by the Pope's forces, certain fugitives from Ferrara.

⁸ Malta, or Marta, a place on the lake of Bolsena, used as a prison for ecclesiastical offenders.

⁹ Seraphim. Isaiah, vi. 2.

That of the six wings have their covering,
 To my desire giveth not contentment?
 From thee I had not waited a request,
 If I could enter thee, as thou canst me.”

“The largest hollow in which water lies,”
 Commenced to me on this wise his discourse,
 “Except the ocean that girds round the earth,
 Between its unlike shores, against the sun
 So far extends, it for meridian takes
 That which did erst as its horizon serve.¹
 I was a dweller on this valley’s shores
 ’Twixt Ebro, and the Magra, in short course
 From Tuscany that parts the Genoese.
 With the same rising and same setting sun,
 Lies Bugia, and the land of which was I,
 Which one time saw its harbour warm with blood.²
 Folco, they used to call me, unto whom
 Was known my appellation ; and this sphere
 With me is impressed as I was by it ;
 For Belus’ daughter³ was not more consumed,
 When she Sichæus and Creusa wronged,
 Than I, since when mine age for it was meet ;
 Nor she⁴ of Rhodope, who so deceived
 Was by Demophoon, nor yet Alcides
 What time Iole to his heart he clasped.
 For this we here repent not ; yet delight
 Not in the sin, which comes not into mind,
 But in the Power that governs and controls.
 Here we admire the art which can direct

¹ According to the geography of the time, the Mediterranean is made to extend, from West to East, ninety degrees of longitude.

² Marseilles is about equally distant from the mouths of the Ebro in Spain and the Magra in Italy ; and has the same meridian as Bugia on the opposite coast of Africa. The slaughter in the port of Marseilles, by Cæsar’s forces, is described by Lucan, *Phars.* iii. 572.

³ Dido.

⁴ Phyllis.

Such great effects, and we discern the Good
By which the upper rules the under world.

"But that thy wishes fully satisfied
Thou mayst bear off, which in this sphere have grown,"⁶
Farther discoursing will not be unmeet.
'Thou wouldst be taught who is within the light,
Which close beside me is now sparkling seen,
Like the sun's rays on a translucent stream.
Know then, that in it tranquilly abides
Rahab,⁷ and added to our company
Is marked in it as of its highest grade.
Up to this sphere, in which the shadow ends
Cast by your earth,⁸ ere any other soul,
She was exalted by the triumph of Christ : 130
It was most fit to leave her as a palm,
Within some sphere, of the high victory,
With one and other hand ' achieved by him.
For she assisted the first great success
Of Joshua upon that holy land
Which scarcely is remembered by the Pope.⁹

"Thy city, whose foundation was by him
Who first against his Maker did rebel,
Whose enviousness has caused so many tears,
The accurséd flower⁹ bears and scatters round, 130
That has the sheep led and the lambs astray,
Because a wolf the shepherd it has made.
For this the Evangelists and Teachers great
Are left and in the Decretals alone¹

⁶ Hebrews, xi. 31.

⁷ Ptolemy makes the length of the earth's shadow reach to the orbit of Venus. ⁸ Nailed to the cross.

⁹ Who takes no pains to recover it from the Infidels.

⁹ The lily impressed on the coin of Florence, (here said to have been founded by Satan) which has raised the wolfish greed of the Pope.

¹ The study of the Scriptures and of Theology is neglected for that of the Canon Law.

Is read as by their margin may be seen.
On this are Pope and Cardinals intent :
To Nazareth do not repair their thoughts,
Where Gabriel his pinions spread abroad.
But Vatican and other chosen spots
In Rome, that have become the sepulchre
Of Peter's soldiery that followed him,
Soon will be freed from this adultery." ²

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² By the removal of the Popes to Avignon.



CANTO X.

THE FOURTH SPHERE, OR SPHERE OF THE SUN —THE
THEOLOGIANS —THOMAS AQUINAS.

CONTEMPLATING his own Son with that Love
Which from the two eternally is breathed,
The primal Majesty ineffable,
All that is present to the eye or mind,
Created in such rule as cannot fail
To be perceived by him who looks on it.

Raise then, O Reader, to the lofty wheels
Thy vision with me turned upon that part,
In which one motion on another strikes ;
And here begin to wonder at the art

10

The Sun (at the Equinox) is in the place where the Ecliptic (the "oblique circle" of v. 14) intersects the Equator.

Of that Designer who in himself loves it
So that he never from it moves his eyes.
Behold in what way from thence branches off
The oblique circle which the planets bears,
To satisfy the world which calls on them ;
And if its pathway had not sloped aside,
Much virtue in the sky had been in vain,
And as 'twere dead all powers of the earth.
So, from the straight path, greater or less space,
Had it departed, also would have failed 20
The mundane scheme in heaven and on earth.

Remain thou, Reader, seated on thy bench,
Thinking on that which has foretasted been,
If thou wouldst be delighted ere fatigued.
Before thee I have set : feed thou thyself ;
For my attention must again resume
The matter which to write I have engaged.

The mightiest of Nature's ministrants,
Who with the heavens' virtues stamps the earth,
And with his light metes out to it the time, 25
With that part, which above has mentioned been,
Conjoined, was wheeling in the revolutions,
In which he earlier each day appears ;²
And I was with him ; but of the ascent
I was not conscious, more than is a man,
Ere its arrival, of the first idea :
Beatrice was it who thus led me on
From good to better, and so suddenly,
Her action could not measured be by time.

How luminous must in its nature be, 30
What is within the Sun, where now I was,

² Rising sooner every day, after having passed the Vernal Equinox.

By light conspicuous, not by differing hue ;
Though I invoked experience, skill, and art,
Describe I could not to be understood ;
But it admits belief, and craves for view.
And if imagination is too low
For such sublimity, it is not strange
For never eye has gone beyond the sun.
Such in that place was the fourth family
Of the High Father, who for aye contents them, "n
Showing the Son born, and the Spirit breathed.

Began then Beatrice : " O render thanks,
Thanks to the Sun of Angels, who to this
Visible one has raised thee by his grace."
No human heart was ever more disposed
To worship ; or to give itself to God
With all its faculties was readier,
Than I became on hearing of these words ;
And upon Him was all my love so poured,
That Beatrice forgotten was eclipsed : "n
Nor this displeased her ; for she gave a smile
Such that the splendour of her beaming eyes
My rapt attention turned to other things.

Then I saw many shining and bright lights.
About us as their centre form a ring,
In voice e'en sweeter, than in vision bright.
Thus girdled round the daughter of Latona
We may observe, what time the laden air
Sustains the threads of which her zone³ is spun. "n
In heaven's courts, from which I have returned,
Are many jewels found, so rich and prized,
That from the realm their export is forbidden ;
And of such was the music of those lights :
Who wings provides not thither to fly up,

³ The lunar halo.

May, from a dumb man, look to hear of it.
Then, as they sung thus, these resplendent Suns
Three times about us did an orbit make
Like those stars that are near to the fixed poles ;
They were as ladies, yet within the dance,
But who break off to listen silently
Until they have caught up the latest strain ;
And thus by one of them I heard said : “ Since
The radiance of grace, from which is kindled
True Love, and afterwards in loving grows,
Upon thee multiplied so lustrous shine,
That upwards they conduct thee by this stair,
Whence none descends that shall not mount again ;
Whoe’er would grudge thee from this vial wine
To quench thy thirst, no more knows liberty
Than water that returns not to the sea.
Taught wouldst thou be with what flowers is adorned
This garland, which as it surrounds salutes
The Lady fair who bears thee to the spheres :
For me, I was a lamb of that blest flock
Guided by Dominic upon that way,
Where they fare well, who flee from vanities.
He, that is nearest to me on my right,
My brother and preceptor was, and Albert ‘
Is of Cologne ; I Thomas of Aquino.”

“ If of the others thou wouldst be informed,
Follow upon my words with thy regards,
Around the blessed chaplet turning them.
That other splendour rises from the joy
Of Gratian,⁴ the courts of either Law
Who so advanced, as pleased in Paradise :
And he, who next to him adorns our choir,

⁴ Albertus Magnus, d. 1280.

⁵ Thomas Aquinas, b. 1224, d. 1274.

⁶ The learned Canonist in the 12th century.

That Peter was,⁷ who like to the poor widow
Offered his treasure up to Holy Church.

*The fifth sheen, and most beautiful of all,
Such love inspires, that all the human race 110
Below is thirsting to be told of him.

Within, is that great light,⁸ where such profound
Wisdom was given, that if truth be truth,
So much to know a second never rose.

Near him observe the brilliance of that torch⁹
Who yet in earth's flesh more than others knew
Of angel nature and its ministry.

Within that lesser splendour smiles in joy
He, that defender¹ of the Christian fanes,
From whom Augustine borrowed arguments. 120

Now if the vision of thy mind thou turn
From light to light my praises following,
Before the eighth, desirous thou wilt rest :

In vision of all good, within it joys
That holy soul,² who the world's vanities
Makes manifest to him that hearkens well ;

The body, from which he was hunted, lies
On earth in Cieldauro ; he from pain
And banishment has to this peace arrived.

Farther, the glowing aspiration note 130
Of Isidor, of Bede, and of that Richard³

⁷ Peter Lombard (d. 1164), author of the "Sentences," a work of Scholastic Theology ; in the beginning of which he compares himself to the widow casting her mites into the treasury.

⁸ Solomon. It was a common question whether his soul was saved. "There was none like thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." 1 Kings, iii. 12.

⁹ Dionysius the Areopagite (Acts xvii. 34), in whose name, a work on the Celestial Hierarchy appeared in the 4th century.

¹ Paulus Orosius, the Christian historian of the world, who wrote in the 5th century.

² Boethius, author of the Consolation of Philosophy ; who was cruelly put to death by order of Theodoric in 525, and buried at Pavia, in the church of St. Peter, called Cieldauro.

³ Isidor, Archbishop of Seville, d. 686.—The Venerable Bede, b. 672,

Whose contemplations were above a man's.
That, from which towards me are your glances thrown,
Is a soul's light, to whom in meditations
Of heaviness, death tardy seemed to be.
That is the light eterne of Sigier,⁴
Who, as he lectured in the Street of Straw,
In syllogisms came on bitter truths."

Then like the horologe that summons gives
What hour rises up the Bride of God,
To pray for love, in matins to her Spouse,
Which drives and urges on its various parts,
Chiming forth *Tin, tin*, in such sweetened tones,
As every pious soul must fill with love ;
On such wise I beheld the glorious wheel
Move and give voice for voice in tempering,
And sweetness, such as cannot be conceived,
But in that place where joy is eternized.

100

d. 735.—Richard, canon of St. Victor at Paris, a mystical theologian, d. 1173.

⁴ Professor, in the 13th century, in the University of Paris, then held in the *Rue du Fouarre*, or street of straw.



CANTO XI.

THOMAS AQUINAS (A DOMINICAN) RELATES THE LIFE OF
SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

OH ! how insensate are the cares of men,
How insufficient are the arguments
By which your pinions in low flights ye use !
Some on the laws, some on the aphorisms '
Were busied, some the priesthood following,

¹ The Aphorisms of Hippocrates ; put for the study of medicine.

Some governing by sophisms or force,
Some plundering, some on civil cares intent,
Some by the pleasures of the flesh possessed
Were sated, some to indolence resigned ;
While I, from all these matters disenthralled, 10
Was to the heavens raised with Beatrice,
Received in them in manner glorious.

Soon as each one of them returned to that
Point of the circle, where at first he was
Fixed as a candle in the candlestick ;
I was aware that withinside that light
Which first had spoken to me, with a smile
As it grew brighter, thus was it commenced.

“ Even as I am kindled by its rays,
So when I look upon the Light Eternal, 20
I can discern the matter of your thoughts :
You doubt, and are desirous to have cleared
In such explicit and enlarged discourse
As fits your understanding, what I said
When I employed the words : ‘ where they fare well,’
And when I said : ‘ A second never rose ’ ;²
And here of nice distinction there is need.

“ The Providence (which rules the universe,
With counsels such that every intellect
Create is baffled ere it sounds their depths) 30
In order that towards his love might come,
The Bride³ of Him, who with a piercing cry
In spousals took her with his blessed blood,
Firm in herself, and with more faith in him,
Two captains for her service has ordained,
On either side to be to her as guides.

² Pa. x. 96 and 114.

³ The church.

One ⁴ all seraphic was in ardent love ;
 The other ⁵ was for wisdom on the earth
 A radiation of cherubic light.
 Of one will I relate ; since of the two
 He speaks who praises one, whiche'er he takes,
 Because their labours were for the same end.

" Between Tupino,⁶ and the stream that flows
 From the hill chosen by the blest Ubaldo,
 A fertile slope of lofty mountain hangs,
 From which Perugia feels the heat and cold
 Through Porta Sole ; ' and behind it mourn
 Nocera and Gualdo its bleak ridge.
 From forth that side of this on which it breaks
 Its steepness most, a Sun rose on the world,
 Like this, what time he rises from the Ganges :
 Wherefore let those who wish to name this place,
 Not say Assisi, which would little tell,
 But say ' The East ' if they would speak aright.

" He from his rising was not far advanced,
 Ere he began to make the earth aware
 Of benefit from his great piety ;
 He yet a boy that maiden in despite
 Of father courted, for whom as for death,
 The gates of pleasure never are unbarred :
 And in face of his spiritual court,
 And in his father's presence married her,
 Then day by day he ever loved her more ;
 She, widowed of the first ⁷ that was her Spouse,
 Obscure and scorned, eleven hundred years

⁴ St. Francis.

⁵ St. Dominic.

⁶ Assisi is described, as lying between the Tupino, and the Chiaasi (which rises near Gubbio, of which St. Ubaldo was bishop) ; and as having Perugia to the west ; and Nocera and Gualdo, on the flank of the Apennines, to the north-east.

⁷ The eastern gate of Perugia.

⁸ Christ.

Until his time remained by all unsought ;
 Nought it availed her to be known unshaken,
 When with Amyclas,⁹ at his voice's sound
 Who had struck terror over all the world :
 Nothing availed such strength and constancy 70
 That, what time Mary at the foot remained,
 She was uplifted to the cross with Christ.
 But lest my meaning should be too involved,
 Francis and Poverty these loving ones
 Thou mayst collect to be from my long strain.
 Their concord, and their happy countenance,
 Love, admiration, and regardings fond,
 Turned to occasion of religious thoughts ;
 And thus it was that venerable Bernard ¹
 First bared the foot and after such great peace 80
 Ran, and the while he ran the time seemed slow.
 O wealth uncounted, true prosperity !
 Egidius and Silvester ² bared the foot,
 Following this bridegroom ; so well pleased the bride !
 Onwards advanced this Father and this Chief
 With his espoused one and that family
 Who by the lowly halter ³ were now led ;
 Nor did a coward heart e'er sink his brow
 As being Pietro Barnadone's ⁴ son,
 Nor that he lived in wondrous sort despised ; 90
 But royally his arduous enterprise
 To Innocent he showed, and won from him
 His Order's earliest acknowledgement.
 After, the self-denying band increased,
 Following him whose admirable life
 Were best sung in the glory of the heavens,

⁹ The poor fisherman who carried Julius Cæsar from Epirus to Italy.
 See Lucan. Phars. v. 527.

¹ Bernard of Quintavalle, the first disciple of St. Francis.

² Other early disciples.

³ The cord of St. Francis.

⁴ A wool-merchant at Amisi.

Invested with a second coronal
Was by Honorius,⁵ through the Eternal Will,
The holy purpose of this Archimandrite.
Afterwards, in the thirst of martyrdom, 100
Before the haughty presence of the Soldan
He and the men who followed him preached Christ,
And for conversion when he found unripe
That people, not to spend his time in vain,
For fruit returned he of the Italian plant.
On a rude rock 'twixt Tiber and the Arno
Received he the last stigmata of Christ,
That were for two years on his members borne.
When Him, who destined him for so much good,
It pleased to raise him to the recompence 110
Due to his choice to be of low estate ;
Unto his brethren, as to his lawful heirs,
Commended he his well-belovéd spouse,
Enjoining them to love her faithfully ;
And from her bosom his illustrious soul
Desired to fly, returning to its realm,
Nor funeral pomp desired for his corpse.

“ Reflect now who should he be that were meet
Comrade of his to navigate the ship
Of Peter in deep seas on the right course : 120
And thou wilt light upon our Patriarch ;
For whoso follows him as he commands,
Will find that he embarks good merchandize.
But now his flock for novel pasturage
So greedy is become, it cannot fail
But many will on different paths diverge ;
And by how much the sheep in wandering
And error from him farther stray away,

⁵ Pope Honorius 3rd confirmed the sanction, given to the order of St. Francis, by Pope Innocent 3rd.

⁶ Aversa in the Apennines, near Chiusi in the Cabentino.

By so much milkless they reseek the fold.
Truly there are some who these losses fear,
And to the shepherd cling ; but these so few,
That little cloth would furnish them with cowls.

130

“ Now if my words have not appeared obscure,
If thine attention has been duly lent,
And my discourse thou bring to memory,
Partly thy wishes will have been fulfilled,
Knowing the tree from which I have been hewing,
And the Corregier⁷ will understand,
‘ Where they fare well, who flee from vanities.’ ”

⁷ The Dominican (so called from his leathern girdle ; as the Franciscan is called a Cordelier from his cord) will understand the rebuke conveyed against the degeneracy of his order. See Pa. x. 96.

CANTO XII.

BONAVENTURA (A FRANCISCAN) RELATES THE LIFE OF
ST. DOMINIC.

So soon as his concluding syllables
The flame beatified began to speak,
Commenced its revolution the blest wheel ;
But it had not made one entire circuit
Before another circle round it wheeled,
Motion to motion adding, song to song ;
Song that our Muses did as much surpass
And Sirens, in those dulcet instruments,
As does the primal the reflected ray.

Like as are reared within a tender cloud
Two parallel and self-same coloured bows,
When Juno to her handmaid gives commands,
The outer from the inner taking rise,
Like the discourse of that fair wanderer ¹
That was dissolved by love, as mists by Sol ;
And which remind the nations upon earth,
By the pact stablished between God and Noah,
That never more the world shall be in flood ;

¹ The nymph Echo. Ovid. Met. iii. 398.

In such wise, of those roses sempiternal
The garlands twain about us did revolve,
And echoed thus the outermost the inner.

26

After this dance and other great rejoicing,
As well in singing as in radiance
Of lights with lights exulting and in joy ;
Together, with one will they came to rest,
E'en as the eyes which at the moving will
Together must be opened and be shut.
From out the heart of one of these new lights
A voice came, which as needle to the pole-star,
Seemed to attract me to the place it held ;
And thus began : "The love which makes me shine
To speech impels me of the other Chief,
Through whom of mine so well has here been said.
Fitting it is, where one leads on the other,
That as the two together have made war,
Together so their glory should shine forth.

30

"Christ's army which at such a heavy price
It cost to refit, following his standard
Marched wearily, distrustful and but few ;
When the Commander who for ever reigns,
Provided for his soldiers in their need,
Of grace alone, and not for their deserts ;
And, as has been said, hastened to his spouse
With champions twain, at whose address and deeds
The people rallied from their wanderings.

40

"Towards that quarter, from which blows to open
The novel foliage the zephyr sweet
Whence Europe finds herself attired anew,
And not far from the beating of the waves,
Behind which in the time of his long course
The sun is hidden from the eyes of men,

50

Felix, most truly was his father named,
 Most truly too his mother was Johanna,⁷
 If its interpretation be correct.
 Not for world's goods, for which men labour now,
 Following Ostiense and Taddeo,⁸
 But for affection of the manna true,
 He grew a mighty teacher in short time,
 And he began to cultivate the vine
 That withers soon if by a sluggard dressed ;
 And from the Seat,⁹ (which one time was benign
 To the just poor, and this not its own act,
 But his who fills it, and degenerates ;)
 No dispensations of a part for all,
 No turn of the first vacant benefice,
*Non decimas, quæ sunt pauperum Dei,*¹
 Demanded he, but 'gainst the erring world
 Licence to join in battle with that seed
 Whence sprung the twice twelve plants² which circle thee.
 With learning afterwards no less than zeal
 In his apostle's office he advanced,
 Like to a torrent urged by springs from high ;
 And 'gainst the roots heretical he flung
 Ever his vehemence with greater might
 Where the resistance was the sturdiest :
 Then was he parted into divers rills,
 By which the catholic garden was kept moist,
 So that its trees might grow more flourishing.

" If such was one wheel of the chariot
 From which the Holy Church her warfare wages

⁷ John, in Hebrew, is God's favour.

⁸ The Cardinal Ostiense, a commentator on the Decretals ; and Taddeo, a physician of Bologna ; put as types of the profession of law and medicine.

⁹ The Papal chair.

¹ No tithes, the portion of the poor of God.

² The Theologians, seen in Canto x. and in this Canto.

And quells in battle field her civil strifes,
 Fitting it is that should be shown to thee
 The merits of the other, of whom Thomas 110
 Before my coming was so courteous.
 But the wheel's track, left by the upper part
 Of its circumference, abandoned is,
 And there is mustiness where once was wine.
 His family, that one time walked so straight
 With feet in his steps planted, is so turned,
 That it reversely in his foot prints walks ;
 And soon may it expect the harvesting
 Of that bad culturage, what time the tares
 Will weep to find the barn denied to them. 120
 This I affirm ; who searches leaf by leaf
 Within our volume, may yet find a page
 Where may be read : I am as I was wont :
 But not in Casal or in Acquasparta, ³
 Whence there arose such readers of his Rules
 That one evaded them, the other strained.

" I am the living part of Bonaventure ⁴
 Of Bagnoregio, who to high employ
 Ever postponed all secondary cares.
 Near are Illuminato and Agostin, ⁵ 130
 Who were among the first barefooted poor,
 That in the girdle were beloved of God :
 There too with them is Hugo of Saint-Victor, ⁶
 Peter Mangiadore, and Spanish Peter, ⁷

³ Casale in Piedmont where the Franciscan rule was enforced with excessive rigour by Ubertino; and Acquasparta, from which the Cardinal Acquasparta took his title, who was General of the order, and as much relaxed it.

⁴ Bonaventure was General of the Franciscans, b. 1221 ; d. 1274.

⁵ Early Franciscans.

⁶ A learned theologian of Paris, d. 1140.

⁷ Petrus Comestor, an ecclesiastical historian, d. 1198—Peter of Spain became Pope as John 21st, d. 1277.

Who still on earth shines in his volumes twelve ;
 Nathan the prophet, metropolitan
 Chrysostom,^a and Anselm,^b and Donatus,¹
 Who to the first art stooped to put his hand ;
 Raban ² is there, and glitters at my side
 The abbot Joachim ³ of Calabria
 Who with prophetic spirit was endowed.
 So great a paladin to celebrate
 Persuaded me the loving courtesy
 Of brother Thomas, and his wise discourse ;
 And with me all this company did move.”

100

^a Metropolitan of Constantinople.

^b Archbishop of Canterbury.

¹ The writer of the Latin grammar in use in the middle ages.

² Rabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mayence, a great ecclesiastical writer of the 9th century.

³ Abbot of Flora, in the 12th century.





CANTO XIII.

THOMAS AQUINAS DISCOURSES OF ADAM CHRIST, AND
SOLOMON.

LET him imagine who desires to know
And keep the image of what now I saw,
Firm as a rock, the while I tell my tale,
The fifteen stars which in their various tracts
The heavens vivify with such a light
As bursts through all the obstacles of air ;
'That Wain imagine, unto whom the lap
Of our own sky suffices day and night,
So that it sinks not as it wheels around ;
Imagine the wide opening of that horn,
Commencing in the axle's very point

On which the first sphere is around us borne¹—
 To be arranged in two signs in the sky,
 Resembling that which Minos' daughter² formed
 What time she felt the iciness of death ;
 The rays of one within the other held,
 And both of them rotating in such wise,
 That forwards one, the other backwards moved ;
 And he will have some shadow of the true
 Figure of stars, and of the double dance,
 Which circled round the point I occupied :
 For it as much outstrips experience,
 As outstripping the motion of Chiana³
 That heaven moves which urges all the rest.

No Bacchic chant nor Pæan here they sing,
 But in Divine existence Persons Three,
 And in One Person, God and man conjoined.

Fulfilled its round their dancing and their song
 And paused to look on us those holy lights,
 Happy in blest variety of joy.
 The silence broke of those harmonious saints
 Thereon the light, from which the wondrous life
 Of God's own poor had been set forth to me,
 And said to me : " Since one ear is thrashed out,
 Already since its grain is garnered up,
 To thrash the other now invites sweet love.
 You think that in the breast from which the rib
 Was taken out to fashion the fair cheeks
 Of her whose palate cost the world so dear,

¹ The twenty-four lights of the two moving circles are compared to fifteen of the brightest stars from all parts of the sky ; to the seven stars of the Great Bear ; and to the two stars of the Lesser Bear, which are at the mouth or opening of the horn, in which figure the stars of that constellation are grouped ; the Pole Star being at its point.

² Ariadne, whose crown was turned into the constellation of the Northern Crown. Ovid. Met. viii. 177.

³ The sluggish river in Tuscany.

And within that, which by the spear was pierced, ⁴⁹
 (And then and after such atonement made
 As weighs against the scale of every crime)
 Far as to human nature is allowed
 Light to possess, was in all fulness poured
 By that Power which created both of them ;
 Therefore you marvelled at my words above,
 When I related that no second had
 The excellence within the fifth light ⁴ held.
 Open thine eyes now to what I reply
 And thou wilt find that my words and thy thoughts ⁵⁰
 Bear on the truth as centre on the circle.

“ All that immortal, all that mortal is,
 Is nought else but the radiance of that Mind
 Which did beget our Saviour in its love ;
 Because the living Light, which so streams forth
 From its bright Source, that ne’er it disunites
 From Him, nor from the Love with them inthired,
 In its own goodness doth unite its rays,
 Like as if mirrored, on nine Substances,
 Itself eternally remaining One. ⁵¹
 Thence it descends on the last potencies
 Downwards from act to act becoming such,
 That it makes nought but brief contingencies ; ⁵²
 And by contingencies I here denote
 Things generated, such as are produced
 With or without seed by the moving heaven.
 Their elements and their development
 Constant are not, and therefore from the mould

⁴ Solomon.

⁵ The God-head, which is pure “Act” (in the language of the Scholastic Philosophy), streams its all-pervading influence from the Empyrean, on the nine moving spheres of heaven, each of which being “active” to those below it, and “potential” to those above it, transmits it, more and more weakened, until it reaches the lowest “potencies” among the transitory things of the sublunary world.

Ideal they gain less or greater light ;
 From which it happens that the self-same tree, 70
 After its kind, bears worse or better fruit,
 And ye of differing genius are born.
 Wholly developed if the matter were,
 And had the sky its highest potency,
 The entire brilliance of the mould were seen :
 But nature sheds it ever on the wane,
 Doing her work like an artificer,
 Skilled in his art, but with a trembling hand.
 Therefore where fervent Love the unerring sight
 Of the First Power disposes and imprints, 75
 Entire perfection may be then attained :
 Thus at the first was clay made capable
 Of highest animal perfectionment ;
 The Virgin also thus became with child.
 For this cause your opinion I commend :
 Since human nature never yet has been
 Nor will be such as in those persons twain.*

“ If I now somewhat further did not go—
 How then without an equal was this man ?—
 Would be the first commencing of your words. 80
 But, that what now is dark may plain appear,
 Think what he was, and him what reason moved
 In his demand, when he was bid to ask.⁷
 I have not spoken so, but that thou mayst
 Perceive he was the King who asked for Wisdom,
 That he might be a monarch worthily :
 Not knowledge of the numbers which attain
 The angels, nor if self-existent truths,
 Joined with contingent will be self-existent,

* As in Adam and Christ, because made by the immediate act of God.

⁷ “ Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said unto God. . . . Give me now wisdom.” 2 Chron. i. 7. Solomon asked for wisdom, and not for information upon the curious questions which occupy the Schools.

*Non si est dare primum motum esse,**

100

Nor if in semicircle can be drawn

A triangle that has not a right angle.

Whence if you note what I have said and this,
As king, his wisdom thou wilt find unmatched,
And to this flew the arrow of my thoughts.

And to the word 'rose' if you clearly look,

You will perceive it only has regard

To kings; of whom are many, but few good.

With this distinction you will take my words;

110

And thus they are consistent with your creed

Of the first parent, and of our Delight.

And this should be as lead upon thy feet,

To make thee move slow, like a wearied man,

To ayes and noes thou dost not well discern;

Because among the foolish he ranks low,

Without distinction who denies or proves,

As well in one as in another place;

For he encounters what will oft ensnare

His heedless judgment into a false path,

120

And then his self-love binds his intellect.

Far worse than empty from the bank departs,

Not such returning as when forth he went,

Who for truth fishes but has not the skill;

And to the world of this are open proofs

Parmenides, Melissus, Bryson,¹ and the rest,

Who moved along, but whither did not know;

Thus did Sabellius, Arius,² and those fools

Who to the Holy Scriptures were as swords,

Disfiguring their well-marked lineaments.

130

Let not the people e'er be too secure

In judgment, like to him who estimates

* Not if first motion be a postulate.

¹ Pa. x. 114.

¹ Put as instances of ancient philosophers who held erroneous opinions.

² Instances of Christian heretics.

His harvest in the fields ere it be ripe ;
For I have watched the livelong winter through
The briar prickly and forbidding seen,
That afterwards bore roses on its top ;
And I have seen the tall and rapid ship
Course o'er the waters her entire voyage
At last to perish at the harbour's mouth.
Let not think Monna Bertha nor Ser Martin^{*}
Because they see one thief, and one give alms,
That they can look within God's purposes ;
Exalted one may be ; the other fall."

110

* Put for "this or that foolish person."

CANTO XIV.

SOLOMON.—ASCENT TO THE FIFTH SPHERE, OR SPHERE OF MARS.
—THE CROSS OF CHRIST.—THE SOLDIERS OF THE FAITH.

FROM rim to centre, and from that to rim
In a round vessel does the water move,
As it is struck within or from without :
Unto my fancy suddenly occurred
This which I mention, soon as silent was
The glorified existence of St. Thomas,
From the similitude which this thing bore
To his discourse and that of Beatrice,¹
Whom, after him, it pleased thus to begin :

“ This man desires, although he tells you not 10
Either by voice, or by his inward thoughts,
To reach the origin of another truth.
Inform him if the light with which is wreathed
Your being, coupled with you will abide
For all eternity as now it is ;
And if abiding, say how, afterwards,
What time ye visibly shall be restored,
It will not give you pain to look on it.”

¹ One speaking from the centre, the others from the circumference of the circle.

As by increasing pleasure urged and sped,
'Twill happen that the circlers in a dance
Their voices raise and animate their steps ;
So at this courteous and devout request,
The holy circles new enjoyment showed
In their gyrations, and their wondrous song.
Whoso laments his dying upon earth
To live in heaven, has not in it seen
The freshening of the eternal dews.

“The One, and Two, and Three that ever live,
And reign for ever in Three, Two, and One,
Uncircumscribed, and all things circumscribing ;”
Three times by every one was chanted forth
Among those souls, with such a melody,
As for all merit would be full reward :
And I heard from the light ² the most divine
Within the lesser circle a still voice,
Such as the angel's haply was to Mary,
Reply to me : “ So long as lasts the feast
Of Paradise, for so long shall our love
Irradiate about us such a vest :
Its brightness follows on our fervency,
Our fervency our Vision ; which is much
As grace beyond its own power grants to it.
What time our glorified and holy flesh
Shall be again put on us, then our forms
Will be more pleasing in their entirety ;
Whence will increase what on us has bestowed
Of his free given light the Good Supreme,
The light which fits us for beholding him.
Hence, it must be, the Vision will increase,
Increase the fervency by that inflamed,
Increase the radiance which from this flows :

² Solomon.

But like as charcoal that gives out a flame,
And in its glowing white surpasses it
So, that its own appearance it asserts ;
Thus will the fulgence which now circles us,
Be overcome in brightness by the flesh
Which now on earth is covered by the mould ;
Nor will so much light overpower us,
Because the body's organs will be strong
For everything that brings with it delight." 60

So prompt and ready then to me appeared
Both one and other choir to say Amen,
As showed their longing for their mortal forms ;
Haply not for themselves, but for their mothers,
'Their fathers, and the others dear to them,
Before that they eternal flames became.
And lo ! around it, and of equal light,
Arose a splendour over what was there,
Like the horizon brightening into day :
And as when rises the first part of night, 70
Fresh objects in the sky begin to show
Apparent seen, but seen as if not true,
So seemed to me that novel beings there
I could discern, which in an orbit moved
Beyond the other two peripheries.

O true effulgence of the Holy Spirit,
How sudden and intensely white it streamed
Upon mine eyes, that quailing bore it not !
But Beatrice so smiling and so fair
Appeared to me, that of the other sights 80
What memory follows not must be passed by.
Recovered then mine eyesight fortitude
To look up, and I found myself translated
To higher joy, alone I with my Lady.
Well might I know that higher I was raised,

By the star's fiery irradiance
Which seemed to me more ruddy than its wont.
With all my heart, and in that kind of speech ³
For all the same, I sacrificed to God,
As was befitting, for his novel grace; 99
Nor was within my bosom yet consumed
The burning of mine offering, when I knew
This service was acceptable and good ;
For in such brilliance and such ruby light
A splendour from amid two beams outshone
That I cried : " Eli, how dost glorify ! "

As, apart from the greater and the less
Stars, holds its white tract 'twixt the mundane poles
The milky way, the sages to perplex ; ⁴
So, constellated, formed within the depths. 100
Of Mars, those rays the venerated sign,
The quadrants of the circle which unites.
Here recollection sinks my faculties ;
For on that cross in glowing sheen was Christ,
And I can find no meet comparison ;
But whoso takes his cross and follows Christ,
Will hold me blameless in what I omit,
When he shall shining on that tree see Christ.
From arm to arm, from summit to the base
Lights moved along with coruscations bright 110
Where they united, or each other passed :
Thus may be seen on earth, now waved, now straight,
Rapid or slow, and aye to sight renewed,
Atoms of matter, slender or compact,
Dance in the beams of light, with which is laced
Oft times the shade, which for their own defence
Men have contrived with artifice and skill.

³ The language of thought.

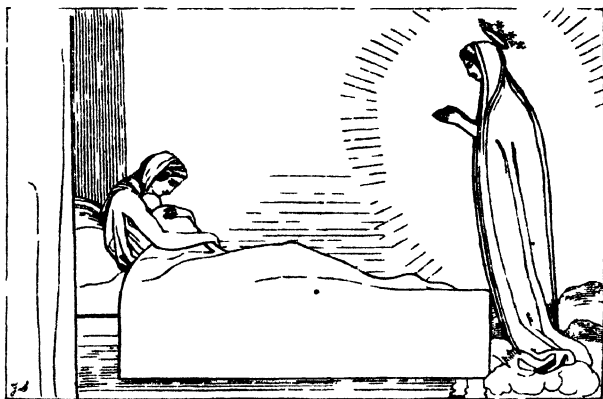
⁴ In allusion to the different speculations on the origin of the Milky Way.

And as the lute or harp if well attuned
 From many chords gives dulcet tinklings forth,
 Yet is not known the theme of its discourse, 130
 So from the lights which there to me appeared
 A melody was gathered through the cross
 Which rapt me though its hymn remained unknown.
 But well I knew it was of lofty praise,
 Because there reached me this: "Arise and conquer:"
 Like to a man who hears not, and yet hears.

Thereupon so much was I filled with love,
 That up to this time was not anything
 Which in such sweet bonds had imprisoned me.
 Perchance my language may appear too bold 130
 Making of less account those fair eyes' joy,
 Gazing on which my longings find repose:
 But whoso ponders that the living seals,
 As they ascend, a higher beauty stamp,
 And that as yet to these⁵ I had not turned,
 May well forgive what 'gainst myself I charge
 In self-excuse, and see that I tell truth;
 In that this blest joy is not here expressed,
 Since by ascent it grows of course more pure.⁶

⁵ The eyes of Beatrice.

⁶ Since his arrival in the Sphere of Mars, Dante's attention has been engrossed by the appearance of the planet and of the glorious cross, and he has not looked at Beatrice in that higher beauty, which he knows must exist as the natural consequence of the ascent to a higher sphere; and of which he actually enjoys the sight in the next canto. v. 32.



CANTO XV.

CACCIAGUIDA —ANCIENT AND MODERN FLORENCE

THAT courteous intent in which is shown
 Ever the love which is breathed rightfully,
 As is in selfishness what breathes from wrong,
 Silence imposed upon that dulcet lyre,
 And rendered still those chords beatified
 Which the Right Hand of heaven slacks and strains.
 To just petitions how can e'er be deaf
 These beings, who to grant to me the wish
 For which I prayed them, to a pause agreed?
 Fitting it is that endlessly should mourn
 Whoso for love of things which do not last
 Eternally, of this love strips himself!

As through the clear and tranquil air of night
 Courses from time to time a sudden flash,
 Rousing the eyes that inobservant were,
 And would a star seem that its place did change,
 But that within the region whence it blazed
 None disappear, and that short time it lives ;
 So from the arm, which to the right extends,
 Down to the foot of that cross, shot a star 20
 From out the constellation which there shines ;
 Nor did the jewel from its band escape,
 But held its course within the lucid beam,
 Resembling light, when seen through alabaster.
 Thus did Anchises' pious shade approach,
 If merits confidence our greatest Muse,
 When in Elysium his son he met.¹
" O Sanguis meus, O super infusa
Gratia Dei, sicut tibi, cui
Bis unquam Cæli janua reclusa ?" 30
 Thus spoke that light ; whereon to him I turned :
 Then turned upon my Lady my regards,
 And in both quarters I was wonderstruck ;
 For in her eyes a smile was radiant
 Such, that with mine I seemed to touch the depth
 Of my delight and of my paradise.
 Then, pleasing to the ear as to the eye,
 Added that spirit to his preface things
 Not understood by me, so high his speech :
 Nor of intention was he from me hid, 40
 But of necessity ; for his conception
 Above the intellect of mortals rose.
 And when the bow of his ecstatic love
 So far relaxed, that his discoursing fell

¹ *Æneid.* vi. 684.

² " O son of mine, O how abundant poured
 God's graciousness on thee, for whom e'er else
 Have been the gates of heaven opened twice !"

Down to the mark of our understanding,
The first thing that by me was understood,
Was : " Be Thou blessed that art Three and One,
To my descendant who art gracious thus ! "
Then said : " The darling and abiding wish
Excited as I read the Mighty book, 50
That never changes in its black and white,
Ended hast thou, my son, within this light
In which I speak, for which to her be thanks
Who for this lofty flight has plumed thy wings.
Thou thinkest that upon me flow thy thoughts
From the First Mind, e'en as may be deduced
From unity, if given, five or six ;
And therefore who I am, and why I am
To thee more courteous, thou askest not,
Than any other of this joyous host. 60
Thou thinkest truly ; for the great and small
In this existence on the mirror look
In which before you think, your thought is shown :
But that the sacred love in which I watch
With constant vision, and which quickens me
With sweet desire, may better be fulfilled,
Let thy voice fearless, bold and cheerfully
Sound forth thy wishes, thy desire sound,
To which mine answer is already fixed."

I turned to Beatrice ; and she had heard 70
Before I spoke, and smiled on me a sign
Which made the wings of my desire expand ;
Then I began : " Love and Intelligence,
(Since in you shines the First Equality)
In equal force in all of you exist ;
For in the Sun, which warms and makes you bright
With heat and light, these so well balanced are,
That no similitude to it can reach.
But will and power among mortal men,

For reasons which to you are manifest,
 Are on their pinions differently sustained.
 Whence I, that am a mortal, now perceive
 This inequality; and therefore give no thanks,
 Except in heart, for this paternal joy.
 I pray thee earnestly, O living Topaz,
 Thou who this precious jewel dost ingen,
 That thou wouldst make me of thy name possessed.”

“O leaf of mine, from whom I have drawn joy,
 Expectant only, know me for thy root;”
 Such answer in commencement did he give,
 And after added: “He,³ of whom is named
 Thy mother’s kin, a hundred years and more
 The Mount has circled on its lower ledge,
 He was my son, and thy great grandfather;
 It were most fit that his long punishment
 For him by thee were shortened by thy works.

“Florence, within her ancient boundary,
 In which she yet receives the tierce and none,⁴
 Modest and temperate, abode in peace:
 She had no chains, no tirings for the head,
 No dames with broidered shoes, no waist girdles
 More than the figure apt to catch the eye.
 Not then from their birth-hour did cause alarm
 In fathers, daughters, lest their dower and age
 On either hand fair measure should exceed.
 She had no houses reft of families;
 Sardanapalus had not yet arrived
 To teach what might in chamber-gear be done.⁵
 Not as yet Montemalo was outstripped

³ Alighiero.

⁴ The public clock, which strikes the hours, still being within the old walls of Florence.

⁵ Luxury had not yet introduced sumptuous furniture.

By your Uccellatoio,⁶ which surpassed
 In its success, so will be in its fall.
 Bellincion Berti ' I have known walk girt
 With bone and leather, and her mirror leave
 His lady-wife without a painted face ;
 And them of Nerli and of Vecchio
 To be contented with an unlined fur,
 And with the distaff and the wheel their wives.
 O happy people ! every one was sure
 Of his own burial place, and as yet none
 For France was left deserted in her bed.
 One would be wakeful for her cradle's charge,
 And in her soothings speak the idiom
 Which erst her sires and her mothers amused ;
 Another, winding from her rock the flax,
 Would repeat stories with her family
 Of Trojans, and of Fiesole or Rome.
 As great a wonder then would have been held
 A Cianghella,⁷ a Lapo Salterello,⁸
 As now a Cincinnatus or Cornelia.

"To such a quiet, such a beautiful
 Life of its citizens, to such a true
 Community, and to so sweet a home
 Mary consigned me, with sharp cries invoked ;
 And in your Baptistry of old note
 A Christian I became and Cacciaguida.
 Moronto, Eliseo, were my brethren ;

⁶ An eminence commanding the view of Florence, as Montemalo, or Montemario, does the view of Rome. It would seem from this passage, that the public buildings in Florence were considered by Dante to be finer than those of Rome ; as indeed they may have been in Dante's time.

⁷ Father of Gualdrada (In. xvi. 37) : put here as a representative of the ancient Florentine nobility ; as are the two families named in v. 115.

⁸ A modern Florentine lady, of a noble family, but of dissolute life.

⁹ A Florentine, of bad character, and a coxcomb in his dress ; who is contrasted with Cincinnatus, as the lady is with Cornelia.

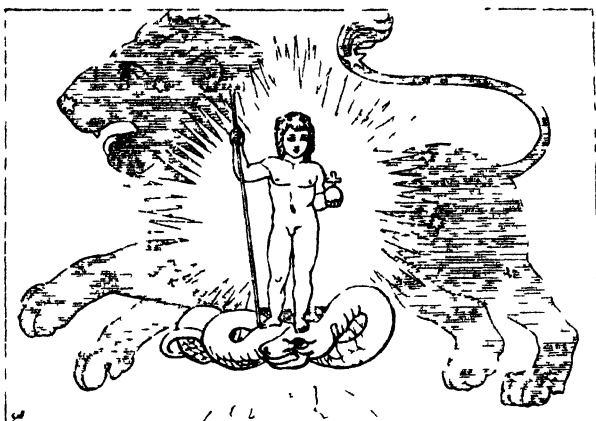
From Val di Pado ¹ came to me my wife,
And from her was thy second name derived.
Conrad the Emperor ² afterwards I served,
And in his warfare he begirt me knight, 144
So much I pleased him by my valorous deeds.
Following him I warred against the crimes
Of that law, whose professors have usurped
Your just rights,³ through the Pastor's faultiness.
There was I by that people infamous
Released from bonds of the deceitful world,
The love of which so many souls defiles,
And into this peace came from martyrdom."⁴

¹ The Alighieri were of Ferrara in the valley of the Po.

² Conrad 3rd, who undertook a crusade to the Holy Land in the middle of the 12th century.

³ The possession of the Holy Sepulchre, allowed to remain in the hands of the Infidels, by the neglect of the Popes to prosecute the Crusades.

⁴ As having fallen in a crusade against the Infidels.



CANTO XVI.

CACCIAGUIDA —ANCIENT FLORENCE.—THE OLD FAMILIES

ALAS ! our brief nobility of blood !
That people use of thee to make their vaunts
On earth below, where languishes our love,
Will never more to me be wonderful ;
For where the appetite is not depraved,
I mean in heaven, I have vaunted it.
Truly thou art a mantle quick to shrink,
So that, unless pieced out from day to day,
Time with his shears curtains thee all around !

With “ Ye,”¹ which Rome was first to introduce,¹⁰
In which its people have not persevered,

¹ The plural pronoun, was first used, as a mark of respect, in the later Roman Empire.

My speech a fresh beginning had essayed ;
 When Beatrice, who something stood apart,
 Smiling, appeared like unto her who coughed
 At the first error writ of Guinevere.*
 Began I thus : " Ye are mine ancestor ;
 Ye give me all encouragement to speak ;
 Ye raise me so that I am more than I.
 In streams so many with delight is filled
 My mind, that it has very joy become,
 And yet contains it without overflow.
 Inform me then, my Parentage beloved,
 Who were your ancestors, and what the years
 Which left their mark upon your boyish days ?
 Speak to me of the sheepfold of St. John,
 What then its size and who the persons were
 Within it worthy of the highest seats ? "

As is revived before the breath of winds
 A burning coal, on such wise saw I this
 Light coruscate at my endearing words ;
 And as he grew more beauteous to the eye,
 So with a softer and a sweeter voice,
 But not in language of these modern times,
 He said : " Since when the *Ave* was pronounced
 To that birth when my mother, now a saint,
 Was lightened of the weight she bore of me,
 Back to its Lion, hundreds five and fifty
 And thirty periods this planet came,
 To be rekindled underneath his feet. "

* In the Romance of Lancelot, the Lady-in-waiting coughs derisively when the Queen kisses Sir Lancelot. (In. v. 128.) Beatrice, who stands aloof while Dante is conversing with Cacciaguida of Florence, smiles at his making a difference in his mode of addressing him, after the sentiments on earthly rank which have just been in Dante's thoughts.

† From the Incarnation to the birth of Cacciaguida, Mars (whose sidereal period is 687 days) had made 580 revolutions, or returned 580

I and my fathers in that spot were born,
 In which the last ward is first come upon,
 By him who races in your yearly games.⁴
 Enough to know this of mine ancestors ;
 For who they were, and whence they thither came,
 It were more modest to withhold than tell.

“The total, who at that time were there found
 To carry arms, between Mars and the Baptist,⁵
 Was a fifth part of what there now exists ;
 But the community, which now is mixed
 From Campi, Certaldo, and from Figghine,
 Was then pure to its lowest artisan.
 O better far had as your neighbours been
 The people named by me, and at Galluzzo
 And Trespiano had your bounds been drawn,
 Than having them within, to bear the stench
 Of churls, Aguglioné, and of Signa,⁶
 Who now for trafficking have sharp set eyes !

“If they who in the world degenerate most,
 To Cæsar had not been as stepmothers,
 But as a mother to her own son kind,⁷
 There is one Florentine,⁸ who buys and sells,
 That would be back to Simifonté turned,

times to the sign Leo ; which gives 1090 as the year of Cacciaguida's birth.

⁴ The Elisei, Dante's ancestors, lived in the quarter or ward of Porta San Piero, which was the most easterly ward ; but at its western edge, upon the Corso, along which the races were run, from west to east, on the annual Festival of St. John.

⁵ Between the statue of Mars on the Old Bridge, and the Baptistry of St. John ; which were at opposite extremities (north and south) of the ancient city.

⁶ Baldo of Aguglione was concerned in the falsification of the records, mentioned Purg. xii. 105.—The other is Bonifacio of Signa, whose particular delinquencies are not known.

⁷ If the Popes had not opposed the Emperor, and so occasioned the Guef and Guibeline factions, with all their train of evils.

⁸ The allusion here remains without explanation.

Where once his grandfather a begging went :
 The Counts had Montemurlo ' still possessed ;
 The Cerchi in Aconé's precinct been,
 And e'en in Valdigrieve the Buondelmonti.
 Ever the mixture of inhabitants
 In cities has the cause of evil been,
 As in the body adding food to food :
 The blind bull is more sudden in its fall 70
 Than the blind lamb ; and oftentimes will cut
 Better and more a single sword than five.

“ Luni and Urbisaglia, if you note
 How they are gone, and how are on the way,
 Chiusi, and Sinigaglia, after them ;
 To learn that families have grown extinct,
 Will not appear a novel or strange thing,
 Seeing that cities have their periods.
 All your belongings own mortality,
 Like as yourselves ; but this in some is masked, 80
 Which long time last, for human life is short ;
 And as the rolling of the lunar sphere
 Covers and bares the shores unceasingly,
 With Florence in like manner Fortune deals ;
 Whence should not as a wondrous thing appear
 What I shall tell of the great Florentines,
 Whose fame has faded by the lapse of time.

“ I saw the Ughi, and the Catellini,
 Filippi, Greci, Ormanni, Alberichi, 90
 Citizens famous, verging on their fall ;
 And I saw ancient, as were powerful,
 With them of Sannella, and them of Arca
 The Soldanieri, Ardinghi, Bostichi.

⁹ A castle formerly belonging to the Counts Guido, and sold by them to Florence in 1209.

Above the gate,¹ which at this time is full
 Of a new felony (such heavy load
 As soon will cause the sinking of the ship),
 The Ravignani were, from whom did spring
 The County Guido, and whoe'er that name
 From old Bellincion has since assumed.
 The house of Pressa had already felt 100
 Its wish to govern; Galigaio had
 A gilded hilt and pommel² in his house.
 The pale of vair³ already was renowned;
 Sacchetti, Giuochi, Sifanti, Barucci,
 Galli, and they who for the measure blushed.⁴
 The stock, of which the Calfucci have come,
 Was powerful; and had already reached
 Sizii and Arrigucci curule seats.⁵
 How great I knew those⁶ who have been destroyed
 By their own arrogance! and the golden balls⁷ 110
 Embellished Florence with their noble deeds.
 Thus likewise did the ancestors of them⁸
 Who, when in vacancy your Church is left,
 Fatten while they remain in consistory.
 That swaggering house,⁹ who, like a dragon, chase
 Who flies from them, but to who shows his teeth
 Or purse, are peaceable as any lamb,
 Were rising in the world, but of low stock;
 So that it pleased not Ubertin Donato¹

¹ The Porta San Piero; where the Cerchi (leaders of the White Guefts) are now living.

² Emblems of nobility.

³ The armorial bearing of the Pigli.

⁴ The Cherimontesi, who were concerned in the fraud upon the bushel. (Purg. xii. 105.)

⁵ Filled municipal offices.

⁶ The Uberti.

⁷ The armorial bearings of the Lamberti.

⁸ The Visdomini, Tominghi, and Cortigiani; who being descended from the founders of the Bishopric of Florence, are the trustees of its revenues, upon which they enjoy themselves when met together during a vacancy of the see.

⁹ The Adimari.

¹ Who was married to a daughter of Bellincion Berti, and was dis-

That with them his wife's father did ally.
 Caponsacco had to the Market-place
 Come down from Fiesole; already were
 Giuda, and Infangato townsmen good.

120

" I tell a thing incredible but true :
 Into their narrow bounds a gateway² led,
 Which from the house of Pera took its name.
 All they who bear the splendid blazonings
 Of the great Baron,³ whose desert and name
 Upon St. Thomas' feast day are renewed,
 Knighthood and privilege received from him ;
 Although upon the people's side is found
 Now he that with a bordure circles it.
 The Gualterotti were, and Importuni ;
 And Borgo now would be the quieter,
 If from new neighbours they had been exempt.
 The house,⁴ through which your troubles have been
 caused,
 By the just anger, which has you destroyed,
 And made an end of all your happy life,
 Itself was honoured and its relatives.
 O Buondelmonte, evilly you fled
 The marriage with it at another's⁵ words !

130

140

pleased when another daughter married into the Adimari family. Dante's possessions were granted to one of the Adimari, on his exile.

² One of the ancient gates was called the Porta Pera, from the family of that name ; showing the absence of envy among the ancient families who could tolerate that one of the public entrances of the city should bear a private name.

³ The Marquis Ugo, who was Imperial Vicar in Tuscany to the Emperor Otho 3rd. He died and was buried at Florence, in 1006, where he was annually commemorated. He ennobled several families, and permitted them to bear his own arms with a difference. Giano della Bella (alluded to in v. 132) bore them in a bordure or.

⁴ The Amidei, through whose well-deserved revenge in the affair with the Buondelmonti, the Guelf and Ghibeline factions came into Florence, with all their miserable consequences. (In. xxviii. 106.)

⁵ Buondelmonte was persuaded to break off his match with the Amidei, by the mother of the lady whom he actually married.

Many would happy be who now are sad,
If to the Ema⁶ God had given thee,
The first time to the city that you came;
But there was need that at the wasted stone,⁷
Which guards the bridge, should Florence immolate
A victim in its latest days of peace.

“With these, and others who with them abode,
I beheld Florence in such peacefulness,
That it had no occasion for complaint.
In time of these, I saw so glorious
And just its people, that the lily flower
Was never borne reversely on the spear,⁸
Nor by division was transformed to gules.”

⁶ A river flowing between Florence and Montebuono, the seat of the Buondelmonti family.

⁷ The statue of Mars, at the foot of which Buondelmonte was slain. (In. xiii. 144—xxviii. 106.)

⁸ Not disgraced by defeat. In the old shield of Florence, the lily was white in a red field; but the Guelfs, for distinction, bore the lily red in a white field.



CANTO XVII.

CACCIAGUIDA — DANTE'S EXILE — PUBLICATION OF THE
DIVINE COMEDY

LIKE him ¹ who went to Clymene to learn
Concerning what against himself he had heard,
He, who to sons still makes their sires severe ; ²
E'en such was I, and such was I perceived
By Beatrice, and by the holy lamp, ³
Who erst for my sake had his station changed.
Wherefore my Lady : " Stifle not the flame,"

¹ Phaeton, who resorted to his mother Clymene, in order that he might with certainty contradict the reports that he was not the son of Phœbus. (Ovid. Met. i. 756).

² From the evil consequences of the permission granted to drive his father's chariot.

³ Cacciaguida.

She said, "of thy wish ; let it issue forth
Bearing the impress of thine inward seal ;
Not indeed that our knowledge would increase
By thy discourse, but that thou mayst grow bold
To tell thy thirst, that they may fill for thee."

10

" O stock beloved, that art so raised on high
That, as the intellects of earth perceive
No triangle has obtuse angles twain,
Events contingent so dost thou perceive
Before they happen, looking on that Point
To which at once is present every time.
While I by Virgil was accompanied,
Ascending up the Mount, which heals the souls,
And while descending to the world of dead,
Were spoken to me, of my future life,
Some heavy words,⁴ although I know myself
Four-squared complete against the blows of fate.
Wherefore my wishes would be well content
To learn what fortune is for me reserved ;
For gentler comes the shaft that is foreseen."

20

I thus addressed my words to the same light
That erst discoursed to me ; and as enjoined
By Beatrice, my wishes were confessed.
In no enigmas,⁵ whence the foolish race
Entangled used to be before was slain
The Lamb of God, who takes away our sins,
But in clear words, and in determinate
Language made answer that paternal love,
Enveloped and displayed by its own smile.

30

" Events contingent, which beyond the volume
Of your material state do not extend,

⁴ In. x. 79 ; xv. 61. Purg. viii. 133 ; xi. 140.

⁵ The heathen oracles.

Are all depicted to the Eternal Sight.
Yet here necessity obtains no place,
More than within the eye where mirrored is
A ship, when it is carried down a stream.
From thence, in manner as fall on the ear
Sweet harmonies from organs, comes within
My sight the time which is approaching thee.

40

“From Athens as Hippolytus went forth
From his perfidious and fierce stepmother,⁶
From Florence so must thou departure take.
This is resolved, and is already planned;
And soon will this be done, for which they long
Where⁷ Christ is every day to market brought.
Blame will be given to the injured side
By common fame, as usual; but revenge
Will be the witness of the truth it brings.
Thou must abandon everything beloved
Most dearly; and this will the arrow be,
From exile’s bow that will the first be shot.
Thou must have proof how bitter ’tis to taste
The bread of others, and how hard the way
When going up and down by others’ stairs:
And what will press upon thy shoulders most
Will be the false and disunited band
With whom into this valley thou must fall;
Who all ungrateful, mad, and furious,
Against thee will become; but in short time
They, and not thou, will have a wounded brow.
Of their stupidity, its own results
Will be the proof, and for thee ’twill be well
That thou hast made a party of thyself.

50

60

⁶ Phœdra.

⁷ At Rome, where Boniface 8th was plotting in 1300, for the expulsion of Dante’s party from Florence.

"Thine earliest refuge and abiding place
 Will be the courtesy of the great Lombard,⁸
 Who on the ladder bears the sacred bird ;
 And who for thee will have such dear regard,
 That in request and action 'twixt you two
 That will be first which is with others last.
 With him thou wilt see him who was impressed '
 So at his birth-hour by this valorous star,
 That his achievements will be eminent.
 As yet the world is not of him aware,
 For he is young, and only for nine years
 Around him have these spheres their orbit made :
 But 'ere the Gascon ' shall great Henry cheat,
 The brilliance of his virtue shall appear
 In his small care for riches or for toil.
 His generosity so widely known,
 Will be thereafter, that his enemies
 Will not in silence keep of it their tongues.
 Look thou to him, and to his benefits ;
 By him will many persons be transformed,
 Changing conditions, rich as well as poor ;
 And something thou must bear writ in thy mind
 Of him, but speak it not"—and he told things
 Incredible if even seen in act.
 Then he went on : " My son, this is the gloss
 Of what was told to thee ; behold the snares
 Which behind few years lie in wait for thee.
 Yet envy not thy fellow citizens,
 Knowing thy term of life will be prolonged
 Beyond the vengeance on their perfidies."

⁸ Bartolommeo della Scala, of Verona ; whose armorial bearings were an eagle upon a ladder (*scala*).

⁹ A prediction of the future greatness of Can Grande della Scala. (In. i. 101.)

¹ Pope Clement 5th, who supported Henry of Luxembourg in his election as Emperor, in 1308 ; but afterwards was his enemy.

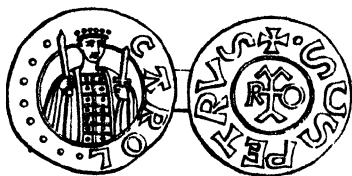
Soon as his silence proved that had surceased 100
The blessed spirit to insert the woof
Into the web which I before him laid,
I made beginning, like a man who craves
In his perplexity advice from one
Who rightly sees, and wills, and is his friend.

“ O my Progenitor, I see that hastes
A time against me to inflict a blow
Aye heaviest to him who most despairs ;
Wherefore 'tis well with prudence to be armed, 110
That if the place most dear to me be lost,
I may not fail of others by my verse.
Down in the world of sorrow without end
And on the mountain from whose summit fair
The aspect of my Lady raised me up,
And afterwards in heaven from light to light
That have I learned, which if I could retell,
'To many it would bitter flavour cause ;
But if to truth I am a coward friend,
I fear lest I my life should lose with them
Who will the time now present ancient call.” 120

The lustre, within which my treasure smiled,
There found by me, became first radiant
Like to a golden mirror in the sun ;
Then he replied : “ The conscience that is dark
Or in its own, or in another's shame,
Truly will feel thy words to be severe :
Nevertheless, all falsehood laid aside,
Publish thy vision in its full extent,
And suffer them to scratch who feel the smart ;
For if thy message should displeasing be 130
At the first tasting, vital nourishment
It will when afterwards digested yield.
Thy proclamation will be like the wind

That ever on the highest summits strikes ;
And this of honour will be no small cause :
Whence have been shown to thee within these spheres,
Upon the mount, and in the woful vale,
Only the spirits who to fame are known ;
Because the hearer's mind pays slight regard,
Nor to examples lends its faith, which have
An unknown and an obscure origin,
Nor yet to arguments that are not plain."

140



CANTO XVIII.

JOSHUA, AND OTHER SOLDIERS OF THE FAITH — ASCENT TO
THE SIXTH SPHERE, OR SPHERE OF JUPITER — THE JUST
RULERS.—THE EAGLE.

Now solitary in his thoughts rejoiced
That blessed spirit, and I proved the taste
Of mine, with bitter tempering the sweet ;
And then the Lady, who led me to God,
Said : “ Change thy thoughts ; bethink thee that I am
Approached to Him who lightens every wrong.”
Around I turned me at the loving tone
Of my consoler ; and what then I saw
Of love in her blest eyes, I here omit ;
Not only that I in my words distrust,
But that the faculties cannot relate
A thing so much above them, without aid.
Thus of that moment only can I tell,
That, as I gazed upon her, my affections
Were liberated from all other wish.
Thus while the Joy Eternal, which direct
Shone upon Beatrice, from her fair face

Rendered me happy with reflected rays,
Subduing me with radiance of a smile,
She said to me: "Attend, and turn thee round; 20
Not in mine eyes alone is Paradise."

As upon earth is noted oftentimes
Love in the features, when it is so great,
That with it all the soul is occupied,
So in the brilliance of the holy light¹
'Towards which I turned, I recognised the wish
In him to speak with me for longer space.
And he commencing said: "In this fifth layer
Of this tree which is nourished from its top,
And ever bears fruit, nor e'er sheds its leaves, 30
Are those blest spirits who on earth, before
They attained heaven, were of mighty fame,
So that of them the Muse were well endowed.
'Therefore regard thou on the Cross's horn
Whom I shall name to thee; there will he do
That which their own swift fire does in the clouds."

I saw, within the Cross, a light that moved
As he named Joshua, soon as this he did,
Nor noted I his word before the thing.
And at the naming of great Maccabee, 40
I saw another move and spin around;
Enjoyment was the whip-thong of his top.
Likewise at "Charlemagne," and at "Rolando,"
My straining sight upon two others followed,
As the eye follows one's own hawk in flight.
Then Gulielmo passed by and Rinaldo,²
And the Duke Godfrey³ in my vision's range,
Along that Cross, and Roberto Guiscardo.⁴

¹ Cacciaguida.

² Godfrey of Bouillon.

³ Paladins of Charlemagne.

⁴ In. xxviii. 14.

Then borne and mingling with the other lights .
 The soul, who with me spoke, displayed to me 50
 What skill he had among the heavenly choir.
 I turned me round upon my right hand side,
 To learn from Beatrice what I should do,
 Either by words, or by some acted sign ;
 And I beheld her eyes so purified,
 So full of joy, that their similitude
 Surpassed their other, and their latest wont.
 And like as from a stronger sense of joy
 A man in working good works, day by day,
 Perceives within him that his virtue grows ;
 So I perceived mine orbit circular,
 Borne with the heavens, had increased its arc,
 Seeing that wonder grow more beautiful :
 And like the change seen in a little space
 Ofttimes in a fair woman, when the brow
 Is of its load of bashfulness discharged ;
 So showed she ⁵ to mine eyes, when round I turned,
 Under the white light of the temperate star,
 In order sixth, that held me in itself.

I saw within that Jovial radiance 70
 The glowing of the love, existent there,
 Charactering our language to mine eyes :
 And as birds, hovering on a river's bank,
 As if rejoicing in their feeding-ground,
 Now form a round, and now a lengthened group ;
 So within lights, the creatures sanctified
 Flew to and fro with song, and formed themselves
 In D, and I, and L in their fit shapes.⁶

⁶ On leaving the red light of the planet Mars for the white light of Jupiter, called in Astrology "the temperate star," as lying between the heat of Mars and the cold of Saturn.

⁶ D, I, and L, are the first letters of the text *Diligite iustitiam qui iudicatis terram*. "Love righteousness ye that be judges of the earth." (Wisdom, i. 1.)

First, singing to their own notes they would move ;
 Then of these letters, as they one became,
 For a short time they paused, and silence held.

O godlike Pegaseau,⁷ who our thoughts
 Mak'st glorious and renderest of long life,
 And by whom states and kingdoms are preserved,
 Shed light on me that I may raise again
 Their figurings as by me understood ;
 Display thy power in these verses few.

Appeared thereafter to me five times seven "
 Vowels and consonants ; and I took note
 Of each part soon as it for me was writ :
Diligite Justitiam, was first
 Of all the imaged verb and substantive ;
Qui judicatis terram, came the next.
 Lastly upon the M of the fifth word
 They stayed in such array that Jupiter
 In that part showed like silver laced with gold :
 And I saw other lights ascend to where
 The summit of the M was, and there rest
 Chanting, I think, the Excellence which moved them.
 Then, as on striking burning brands of wood
 Innumerable sparkles use to rise,
 From which the foolish folk draw auguries,
 There seemed from hence to rise more than a thousand
 Lights, and to mount some more and some less high,
 E'en as the Sun, that kindled them, determined ;
 And when each in his proper place was still,
 Then could I see an eagle's neck and head
 That were presented in that fire distinct.
 He, who in that place paints, has none for guide ;

⁷ The Muse Calliope, who was invoked at the beginning of the Purgatory.

⁸ There are thirty-five letters in the sentence *Diligite, &c.*

But is his own guide, and from him is drawn 119
 The power which gives figure to the moulds.
 The other blessed troop, who all content
 To crown the M with lilies, seemed at first,
 With a slight movement followed the device.

O lovely Star ! How many and what gems
 Demonstrated to me that our justice
 Is the effect of that sphere which thou studdest !
 Therefore I pray the Mind, in which begins
 Thy power and thy motion, to reflect
 Whence comes the smoke which vitiates thy rays ; 120
 So that a second time it may be wrath
 At buying and at selling in the Temple,
 That was built up with signs and martyrdoms. .

Ye Hosts of heaven, upon whom I gaze,
 Offer your prayers for them that are on earth
 All led astray by bad example's force :
 Once with the sword it was the wont to war,
 But now they take away, now here, now there,
 The bread which the good Father keeps from none.⁹
 And thou, that only writest to erase, 121
 Bethink that Paul and Peter, who both died
 For the Vine, which thou wastest, are alive.
 Well mayst thou say : " I hold so strong a love
 For him ' who chose a solitary life,
 And for a dance was led to martyrdom,
 That I nor Paul know, nor the Fisherman."

⁹ The Popes, by their interdicts and excommunications, deprive the people of religious sustenance; and they are often imposed only in order that they may be revoked for money.

¹ St. John the Baptist, whose image was on the coins of Florence, and is here put for the coins themselves.

CANTO XIX.

THE EAGLE.—THE JUSTICE OF GOD.—EVIL CHRISTIAN RULERS

APPEARED in front of me with open wings
The glorious emblem, which in its sweet joys
Made to rejoice the interwoven souls :
Showed each one as a ruby upon which
The radiance of the sun so brilliant shone,
That to mine eyes it threw it back again ;
And what, succeeding this, I must relate,
Language has never told, nor ink has writ,
(Nor in imagination has been framed ;
(For I saw, and I heard the beak which talked 10
(And sounded with its voice both I, and Mine,
(Yet in conception it was We, and Ours.
And it began : “ For being just and good
Am I exalted to this glory here,
Which cannot in desire be exceeded !
And upon earth I left my memory
Such, that the people there of evil mind
Commend it, but its story follows not.”

As but one heat from many burning brands
Is to be felt, so from the many loves
Within that emblem issued but one voice. 20

Whereon I followed : " O perpetual bloom
 Of the Joy Everlasting, who as one
 All of ye make me to perceive your odours ;
 Resolve me, by your breath, the mighty fast
 Which for long time has kept me hungering,
 Finding upon the earth no nourishment.
 I know, that if in heaven another realm ¹
 The Divine Justice for its mirror takes,
 Yours does not comprehend it through a veil. ²
 Ye know, as I prepare myself intent
 'To listen ; ye understand in me what is
 The doubt, which keeps me in such lengthened fast."

Like as a falcon, issuing from the hood,
 'Tosses his head, and claps him with his wings,
 To show his eagerness, and plumes himself ;
 Thus saw I do this emblem, that by praise
 Of the Divine Grace was together held,
 With song, as known to them who joy above.

Then it began : " He who the compass turned ³
 'To the world's furthest limit, and within it
 So much distinguished as concealed or known,
 Could not so make his power to be impressed
 On all the universe, but that his Word
 Should still remain surpassing infinite ;
 And this makes certain that the first of proud ones, ⁴
 Who was the highest of the whole created,
 Fell immature, as staying not for light :
 And hence is seen that every lesser nature
 Is but a scant recipient of that Good ⁵
 Without end, and which its own measure is.
 Therefore our power of vision, which as seems
 Must as a radiance of the Mind exist

¹ The Thrones of the heavenly Hierarchy. See Pa. ix. 61, and xxviii. 104.

² Lucifer.

Wherein all things have their replenishment,
In its own nature cannot power attain
So great, but that its origin it sees
Far different, from what it really is, appearing.
And therefore into Justice sempiternal
The vision that is by your world received,
As through the sea the eyesight, penetrates ;
Which while it sees the bottom near the shore,
In the ocean cannot see it ; yet no less
Exists it, but the deepness covers it.

“ There is no light, but that from the Serene
Which never is disturbed ; the rest is dark,
Or shadow of the flesh, or else its poison.
Now is laid bare for thee the secret place
Which living Justice from thee held concealed,
Of which thou hast such frequent question made ;
Thou hast said : One is born upon the banks
Of Indus, and in that place preaches none
Of Christ, nor any reads of him, nor writes ;
And all his wishes and his virtuous deeds
Are, far as human reason can perceive,
Without blame in his life and in his speech :
He dies without the Faith, and unbaptized ;
Where is the justice which condemns this man ?
Where his offence, if he did not believe ?——
And who art thou, that on the bench would sit
To judge what is a thousand miles removed
With the brief vision of a single span ?
Truly to him who heeds my reasoning,
If Scripture over you did not extend,
There would be ample room enough for doubt.
O terrene animals, O minds obtuse,
The first Will, which is in its own self good,
Ne’er from itself, which is the Chief Good, moves.
So much is just as does with this accord ;

No good created draws this to itself,
But, as it radiates, this causes that."

90

As wheels when hovering above her nest
The stork what time her young she has supplied,
And as the one that has been fed looks on her,
So did I raise the eyelids, and so did
The sacred image, which its pinions
Moved, by so many counsellors sustained.
It sang as it wheeled round, and said "E'en as
To thee my notes are, which thou knowest not,
Such to you mortals is the Eternal Judgment."

When came to rest those brilliant luminaries
Of the blest Spirit, still within the sign
Which made the Romans honoured by the world,
Again it made beginning: "To this realm
Has mounted none who trusted not in Christ,
Before nor since he to the tree was nailed.
But behold many are who cry: Christ, Christ;
Who shall in judgment be as far removed
From him, as he who never has known Christ:
Such Christians Ethiopia shall condemn,
When shall be parted the two companies,
One rich for ever, and the other poor.
What may the Persian monarchs say to yours,
When they that volume opened shall behold,
In which are written all their evil deeds?
There will be seen among the works of Albert³
That one which soon will cause the pen to move,
By which the realm of Prague will be laid waste.
There will be seen the ills which on the Seine
Occasioned, when he falsified the coin,
He⁴ from the onslaught of the boar who died.

100

110

120

³ The Emperor Albert who invaded Bohemia in 1303.

⁴ Philip the Fair, who depreciated the French coinage to pay for his

There will be seen the ambitious jealousy
 Which drives the Englishman and Scotsman^b mad,
 So that they cannot keep within their bounds.
 The luxury will be seen, and the soft life
 Of them of Spain,^c and of Bohemia,^d
 Who virtue neither understood, nor sought.
 Jerusalem's Ciotto^e will appear,
 His excellence denoted by an I,
 While with an M the opposite is marked.
 The avarice and baseness will be seen
 Of him^f who rules the island of the flames,
 Where his long life Anchises brought to end;
 And to set forth his utter littleness,
 Contracted letters will his entry form,
 That will express much matter in short space.
 And will be known to all the evil works,
 Of his uncle and his brother,^g who such famed
 Descent, and two crowns to disgrace have brought.
 And they of Norway,^h and of Portugalⁱ
 Will there be known, and he of Rascia^j
 Who ill for him the coin of Venice saw.

O blessed Hungary, if she suffer not
 Further ill treatment! and O blest Navarre,

Flemish war—He was killed by a fall in hunting in 1314, said to have been caused by a wild boar running between his horse's legs.

^a Edward 1st and Robert Bruce.

^b Probably Ferdinand 4th, king of Castile (1295—1312)

^c Wenceslaus 4th. (Purg. vii. 101.)

^d Charles 2nd, king of Naples and Jerusalem (a title still preserved). He was called Ciotto, or the Lame. The I and M are the Roman numerals for 1 and 1000.

^e Frederick of Sicily (which contains Ætna), son of Pedro 3rd of Arragon.

^f James, king of Majorca and Minorca, and James 2nd of Arragon.

^g Probably Haquin, king of Norway.

^h Dinis, king of Portugal (1279—1325).

ⁱ One of the Princes of Rascia counterfeited the Venetian coin. In the 13th and 14th centuries there was an independent Slavonic kingdom of Rascia, out of which the modern Turkish province of Bosnia was formed.

If she would arm her with her girdling hills !^a
And even now may men think, that in pledge
Of this, Nicosia and Famagosta^a
Should for their beast bewail themselves and howl,
Who moves not from the others' sides away."

^a The Pyrenees.

^a Towns in Cyprus ; put for the island, governed by the kings of the Lusignan family.

CANTO XX.

THE EAGLE.—DAVID, TRAJAN, &c.

WHEN he who all the world illuminates,
Down from our hemisphere departure takes,
When upon every side the day is spent,
The sky, erst lighted up by him alone,
Is on the sudden newly constituted, seen
With many lights in which the one does shine.
Rose to my mind this action of the sky
When that sign ¹ of the world and its commanders
Silently rested in its sacred beak ;
And thereon all those living splendences,
In far more brightness, entered upon songs
That from my memory are lapsed and gone.

O sweet Love, that art mantled with a smile,
How fervent in those embers didst appear,
Which have for holy thoughts alone a soul.
After the precious and refulgent gems,
Jewelled with which I noted the sixth light,
Silence imposed upon their angel bells,
I seemed to hear the murmuring of a stream,
That down from rock to rock pellucid falls,
Displaying the abundance of its source :

¹ The Eagle.

And as the notes upon the cittern's neck
 Assume their tone, and at the ventages
 Of the recorder the escaping breath,
 So, no delay of pause being interposed,
 This murmuring throughout the eagle rose
 Up through the neck, as if it had been hollow :
 There it obtained a voice, and issued thence
 From out the beak in semblance of discourse
 Such as the heart, in which I wrote it, sought : 30

“That part of me which views and bears the sun
 In mortal eagles,” it began to me,
 “Thou, with an earnest gaze, must now regard ;
 For of the lights whence I my figure shape,
 These with which sparkles in my head mine eye,
 Of all the rest are chiefest in their rank :
 He,² who as pupil in the middle shines,
 That singer of the Holy Spirit was,
 From town to town who bore along the ark :
 Now he has learned the merit of his song, 40
 So far as of his will it was the effect,
 In his reward, which is proportionate.

“Of those five, who for orbit form an arch,
 The one³ who nearest to my beak is placed,
 Gave comfort to the widow for her son :
 Now he has learned how heavily it costs
 Not following Christ, by the experience
 Of this sweet life, and of its opposite.
 And he⁴ who in the circle follows next,
 Of which I speak, upon its upper arc, 50
 By a true penitence postponed his death :
 Now he has learned that the Eternal Judgment
 Altered is not, because a worthy prayer

. ² David. 2 Sam. vi.

³ Trajan. Purg. x. 73.

⁴ H Ezekiah. 2 Kings, xx. ; Isaiah, xxxviii.

On earth the present day a morrow makes.
 The next ⁶ who follows, with his laws and me,
 In good intention which bears evil fruit,
 Became Greek, for the Pastor to make way :
 Now he has learned this, that the evil drawn
 From his good work himself has injured not,
 Although by it the world has been destroyed. 10
 And him thou mayst see in the lower curve,
 Was Gulielmo, ⁶ whom that land laments,
 Which weeps for Charles and living Frederick :
 Now he has learned what mighty love bestows
 Upon a just king Heaven ; and with the sight
 Of its own light it further shows it him.
 Who wandering on the earth below would think,
 That Ripheus' the Trojan in this group
 Of the blest luminaries was the fifth ?
 Now he has learned a part of what the world 20
 In the Divine Grace cannot understand ;
 Although his vision reaches not its depths."

E'en as the lark that floating in the air
 First sings awhile, then pauses satisfied
 On the last sweetness that gives full content :
 So seemed to me the image of the seal
 Of the Eternal Will, at whose behest
 All things as they exist are made to be.
 And notwithstanding I was to my doubt
 As glass unto the colour lining it, 30
 No time in silence would it let me wait,
 But from my mouth : " These things what can they be ? "
 Compelled it me to utter by its force ;
 Whereon I saw great joy of flashing rays :

⁶ Constantine, who removed the seat of empire to Byzantium, leaving Rome to the Popes.

⁶ William 2nd of Sicily, called the good ; (1167-1189.)

⁷ Called by Virgil the most just of the Trojans, *Æneid.* ii. 426.

And afterwards, with brighter glowing eye,
The blessed emblem made to me response
To hold me not in marvelling suspense.

" I see that thou these matters dost believe
Because I tell them, but thou know'st not why ;
So that, not understood, they are believed. 90
Thou art as one who by its name a thing
Well knows ; but what its quiddity may be
Cannot conceive unless by others taught.
The heavenly kingdom suffers violence "
From living hope and animating love,
Which the divine intention overcome ;
Not as a man against a man prevails,
But conquer it, as it wills to be conquered,
And conquered conquers by its clemency.

" Upon the orbit the souls first and fifth " 100
Astonish thee, for that with them thou seest
The region of the Angels is adorned.
They left their bodies not, as thou dost think,
Gentiles, but Christians in established faith,
Of the pierced feet, or pierced that were to be ;
For one of them from Hell, whence none returns
Ever to good-will, to his bones came back,
And this of lively hope was the reward :
Of lively hope which threw its potency
Into the prayers to God made, to upraise him, 110
So that his power of willing might be stirred.
The glorious soul of which we hold discourse,
To flesh returned, in which short time it dwelt,
Believed on him who had the power to save ;
And in this Faith was kindled to such heat
Of true love, that upon its second death

* Matt. xi. 12.

9 Trajan and Ripheus ; one believing in Christ before, the other after
he was nailed to the cross by the feet.

Worthy it was to come into this joy.
The other,¹ by grace, which from so fathomless
A well distils, that no created one
Has ever bent the eye on its first source, 130
On earth placed all his love in rectitude :
Wherefore from grace to grace God opened him
His vision our Redemption to foresee :
And he believed in it, nor could abide
The stench of paganism from thenceforth, .
And he reproved of it the erring men.
In place of baptism were those Ladies three,
Whom thou beside the right wheel didst behold,
More than a thousand years ere baptism was.

“ Predestination, O how far removed 131
Is thine original from the regards
Which the First Cause do not entirely see !
And you, ye mortals, hold yourselves exact
To judge of that which we, who God behold,
All the elected, understand not yet ;
And here such failure a delight becomes,
Because our good is bounded in this good,
That whatsoe'er God wills, will also we.”

From that divine resemblance on this wise, 132
To make within me bright my vision short,
This pleasing medicine on me was bestowed.
And as on singer good a lutist good,
Makes follow the vibration of the strings,
So that the song may more of pleasure gain :
So while it conversed, I can recollect
That I the two blest luminaries saw,²
E'en as concurs the twinkling of the eyes,
Vibrate together with the words their flames.

¹ Ripheus.

² Trajan and Ripheus.

CANTO XXI.

ASCENT TO THE SEVENTH SPHERE, OR SPHERE OF SATURN -
THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO HAVE LED A CONTEMPLATIVE
LIFE.—THE HEAVENLY STAIR.—PIER DAMIANO

AGAIN mine eyes were fixed upbn the face
Of my fair Lady, and with them my mind,
That from all other matter was removed :
And smiled she not : but, “ If I were to smile,”
Began she to me, “ such wouldst thou become
As Semele to ashes when reduced ;
Because my beauty, which upon the stairs
Of the eternal palace brighter grows,
As thou hast marked, the higher it ascends,
Unless it were attempered, shines so bright,
That at its lightning-glance thy mortal power
Would as a branch show by the thunder riven.
We to the seventh splendour now are raised,
Which underneath the burning Lion’s breast
A tempered influence radiates below.’
Fix thine attention following thine eyes,
And make of them a mirror for the form
Which in this mirror will to thee be shown.”

Saturn is in Leo, and its natural cold is tempered by the warmth of

Whoso conceives what was the pasturage
Of my regards on that blest countenance,
When to another care aside I turned,
Will understand how pleasing 'twas to me
My heavenly conductor to obey,
Weighing the one against the other side.

Within the crystal which the title bears,
Circling the world, of its beloved king,²
Under whose rule all wickedness was dead,
Of hue of gold on which a sunbeam falls,
I saw a flight of steps built in ascent,
So high mine eyesight could not follow them.
Further I saw ascending on the steps
Such splendences, that I thought all the light
In heaven seen from them must be diffused ;
And, as their nature's instinct to fulfil,
The rooks assembled at the break of day
To warm their chill wings into motion get,
When some away depart and come not back ;
Others return to whence at first they flew,
And others wheeling round a sojourn make ;
So seemed it me that in that place were some
Among that brightness who together flocked,
Soon as a certain step they had attained :
And that one who the nearest to me stayed,
Became so bright, that in my thoughts I said :
' I see the love which thou dost indicate.'
But she from whom I take the when and how
For speech or silence, stood mute ; wherefore I,
Against my wish, did well in asking not.
Whereupon she, my silence who beheld
Within the sight of Him who all things sees,
Said to me : " Satisfy thy fervent wish."

² Saturn, the King of the Golden Age.

And I commencement made : " My own deserts
Make me not worthy thy reply to have ;
But by her who has granted me this boon,
O blessed life, that dost inshrouded stand
In thine own gladness, let to me be known
The reason why so close to me thou art ;
And also why within this sphere is mute
The dulcet symphony of Paradise,
Which in the lower so devoutly sounds." 60

" Thou hast a mortal ear as well as sight,"
Answered he me ; " whence here there is no song
For the same cause that Beatrice has no smile.
Down on the stages of the sacred stair
For thy joy only have I come so low,
With speech, and with the light that mantles me ;
Nor readier did make me greater love ;
As much and greater love above there shines,
E'en as their radiance to thee manifests.
But the High Love which here makes ministers 70
Prompt of the counsel which directs the world,
Appoints in this place, as thou dost observe."
" Well I discern," I said, " O sacred lamp,
How in this court affection unrestrained,
Suffices providence eterne to obey.
But this is what to understand seems hard :
Predestinated only why wast thou
For this employment of thy company ?"

Before I had arrived at my last words,
He of his inner light a centre made, 80
Whirling himself round like a rapid mill.
Answered me then the love that was within :
" On me directed is a light divine,
Piercing through this within which I am wrapt,
Whose potency with mine own vision joined

Lifts me above myself, that I can see
 'The Highest Essence from which this proceeds.
 Hence is derived the joy in which I blaze,
 For to my vision as it clear becomes
 I equal make the clearness of my flame. 99
 But in the heavens the soul most purified,
 The Seraphim with sight most fixed on God,
 Could not resolve thee in thy questioning ;
 Because so far removed is in the abyss
 Of the Eternal Statute what thou askest,
 That from all sight create it is cut off.
 And to the mortal world, returning thou,
 This thing relate, that no one may presume
 To such a wonder to attempt approach.
 The mind, here bright, is smoky on the earth, 100
 Therefore consider how it can below
 Do what it cannot when by heaven raised."

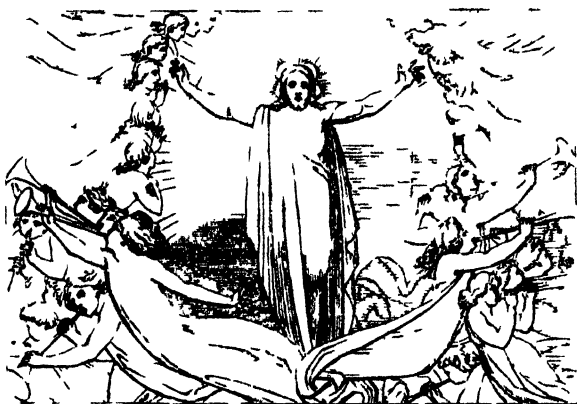
His words upon me such prescription laid,
 That I my questions left, and I drew back
 Humbly to ask of him who he had been.
 "'Twixt the two shores of Italy rise hills,
 Which from thy country are not far removed,
 So high, that underneath the thunder rolls ;
 'They form an eminence, Catria³ named,
 Below which is a consecrated cell, 101
 Which has to worship only been applied."
 Began again on this wise his third speech ;
 And in continuance said he : " In this place
 Became I in God's service so confirmed,
 That only fed upon the olive's juice,

³ A mountain in the Apennines between Gubbio and Pergola, at the base of which stood the convent of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana, the retreat of Pier Damiano. He was made a Cardinal (as alluded to in v. 125) in 1057, and d. 1080. Pietro Peccator, sometimes confused with him, founded the convent of Santa Maria del Porto, near Ravenna, and d. 1119.

Lightly I passed the summers and the frosts,
Contented with my contemplative thoughts.
'That cloister used to yield fruit to these skies
In plenty, but it now is rendered naught,
So that it must in short time be found out. 120
In that place lived I, Pier Damiano ;
(Pietro Peccator was in the house
Of our Lady on the Adriatic shore :)
Little of mortal life to me was left,
When to that hat I summoned was and forced,
Which ever passes from the bad to worse.
Went Cephas, and that mighty Vessel went '4
Of the Holy Spirit, poor and barefooted,
Receiving victuals from any house :
Now upon either side must have their suite, 130
The modern pastors, some to lead the horse,
Such their importance, some to bear the train.
Their palfreys and themselves in cloaks they hide,
So that two beasts in the same housings go :
O Patience, that for so long hast endured !"

Upon this sentence I beheld more flames
Descend from stair to stair, and eddy round,
And at each turn more beautiful they grew.
Round this one they collected and stood still,
And raised a cry of such exalted tone, 140
That here for it no likeness can be found ;
Nor heard it I, its sound so vanquished me.

⁴ St. Peter, and St. Paul.



CANTO XXII.

61 BENEDICT—ASCEND TO THE EIGHTH SPHERE, OR SPHERE OF
THE FIXED STARS

By terror overpowered, to my guide
I turned me, like the little child who runs
Ever to where it has most confidence :
And she like mother who her comfort gives
On the instant to her pale and breathless son
With accents that are wont to reassure
Said : “ Know’st thou not that thou in heaven art,
And know’st thou not that Heaven is all holy,
And thus which happens now is of good zeal ?
How would the singing have transported thee,
And I, if smiling, now thou mayst reflect,
Since this cry so much has affected thee ;

In which if thou hadst understood their prayers,
Disclosed to thee the vengeance now would stand,
Which thou before thy dying day shalt see.
Smites not the falchion from on high in haste,
Nor tardily, except in thought of them
Who wait for it in longing or in fear.
But to the others turn thee round again ;
For some illustrious spirits thou wilt see,
If, as I bid thee, thou bring back thy looks."

I, at her pleasure, did mine eyes direct,
And I an hundred globes saw which together
Increased in beauty in their mutual rays.
I stood as one within himself who checks
The edge of his desire, and ventures not
To ask, so fearful is he to exceed ;
And that, which largest and the brightest was
Among those margarites, before me came
Of his own will, to give my wish content.
Within it then I heard : " If thou couldst note,
As I, the love among us which is kindled,
Thy wishes would be manifestly seen ;
But, that in waiting thou mayst not delay
On thy high purpose, I will give reply
To thy thoughts only, which thou dost repress.
The mountain ¹ on whose flank Cassino lies,
Was on its summit erst inhabited
By the deceived and evil-hearted race ;
And I am he who up to it first bore
The name of Him who introduced on earth
The truth which in this place so much exalts ;
And on me there did shine so much of grace,

¹ Monte Cassino, in the kingdom of Naples, upon which a temple of Apollo stood, which was destroyed by St. Benedict, and where he built the first monastery of his order.

That I recovered the surrounding towns
 From the curst worship that seduced the world.
 These other torches, all contemplative
 Men were, and they were kindled by that heat
 Which makes the holy fruit and flowers grow.
 There is Macarius,² there Romoaldo,³
 There are my brethren, who within the cloister
 Trod, and maintained their resolution firm."

And I to him : "The love thou dost display
 In speaking with me, and the fond regards
 I see, in all your flames is to be seen ;
 So has expanded me my confidence,
 As does the rose the sun, when opened forth
 It is as much as to it is allowed.
 Wherefore I pray, and thou, my father, say
 If I so much grace may assume that I
 May see thee with thy figure unconcealed."

Then he : "O brother, thine exalted wish
 Within the last sphere will fulfillment gain,
 Where are fulfilled all others and mine own.
 There is mature, and perfect, and complete
 Every desire ; within that alone
 Is every part where it has always been ;
 For it is not in space nor turns on poles,
 And reaches up our ladder far as this,
 Whence from thine eyesight it thus vanishes.
 Far as that height saw it the Patriarch
 Jacob, extending its superior part,
 When full of Angels it was shown to him.
 But to ascend it, none now ever takes
 His feet from off earth ; and my regulations

² The Egyptian anchorite in the 4th century.

³ The founder of the order of Camaldoli, d. 1027.

Only to spoil the paper stay below.
The walls that once an abbey used to be,
Are now become a den, and the monks' cowl
Are sacks that are filled up with worthless meal;
For grievous usury not so much offends
Against what pleases God, as does that fruit
Borne by the heart of such perverted monks:
For, what the Church possesses, all of it
Belongs to them who worship in God's name,
And not to kinsfolk, or to others worse.
The flesh of mortals is so pliable,
That good beginnings last not upon earth,
From the oak's birth until it acorns bears.
Peter began, without or gold or silver,
And I, with fasting and with use of prayer,
And Francis, humbly, his community.
And the beginning if thou view of each,
Then reflect whither it has gone astray,
From white to black thou wilt remark it changed.
Truly the river Jordan, driven back,
Or the sea flying at God's will, were more
A miracle to see, than aidance here." ⁴

Thus spoke he to me; and from thence returned
Back to his colleagues, and his colleagues closed;
Then like a whirlwind all were carried up.
The lovely Lady drew me after them
Up by that staircase at a single nod,
So did her power my nature overcome;
Nor e'er on earth, in climbing or ascent,
By nature has such rapid motion been,
As that it could be equalled with my flight.

⁴ The miracles recorded in Scripture were more extraordinary interferences of Providence with the course of nature, than a divine interposition to punish the corruptions of the Church would be; and such may therefore be expected.

As may I, Reader, regain that devout
Triumph, for sake of which I oft bewail
My own transgressions, and my bosom strike,
So quick thou couldst not have put in and drawn
From fire thy finger, as I saw the sign ¹¹⁰
Which follows Taurus, and within it was.

O glorious constellation, O light charged
With mighty power, in which I recognise
My character, whatever it may be;
With you arose, and with you fled from sight,
He that is father of all mortal life,
When at the first I drew the Tuscan air;
And afterwards when grace to me was lent
'To enter the high sphere which there revolves,
Your region was the one to me assigned. ¹²⁰
'To you devoutly now its wishes breathes
My spirit, that a virtue it may gain
For the hard pass to which it is attracted.

“To Highest Welfare now thou art so near,”
Began thus Beatrice, “that it were fit
Thou hadst thine eyes acute and purified:
And therefore ere thou further enterest,
Downwards look back, and note the universe
Beneath thy feet which is already spread;
So that thy heart, as far as may be, glad ¹³⁰
May make approach to the triumphant throng
Which through the rounded ether goes in joy.”

In sight I took my way back through them all,
The seven spheres, and I beheld this globe
Such that I smiled at its appearance vile;
And I approve as worthy his resolve,

* Gemini; in which sign the sun was at Dante's birth.

Who holds it light ; and who seeks other things
 May of a certainty be virtuous called.
 I saw the daughter of Latona shine
 Without that shadow, which the reason was 140
 By which I one time thought it rare and dense.⁶
 Hyperion, the aspect of thy son,⁷
 Sustained I there, and saw in what sort moved
 Near and around him Maia and Dione :⁸
 Temperate Jupiter appeared to me
 'Twixt son and father ;⁹ and to me grew clear
 The change in their positions which takes place ;
 And the whole seven were to me disclosed,
 Of size and swiftness even as they are, 150
 And in their distances as they are set.
 This little spot, which makes us here so proud,
 As I revolved with the eternal Twins,
 Wholly appeared to me with hills and seas :¹
 Then to the fair eyes, I returned mine eyes.

⁶ Pa. ii. 60.

⁷ The sun.

⁸ The mothers of Mercury and Venus ; put for those planets.

⁹ Mars and Saturn.

¹ Dante, therefore, as he can see the whole habitable earth, is above the meridian of Jerusalem, placed by the geography of his time in its centre. See Pa. xxvii. 79.

CANTO XXIII.

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST.—THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

LIKE to a bird, in the loved foliage
Couched by the nest of her sweet progeny,
Throughout the night, that hides the things of earth,
Who for the sight of their desired regards,
And for the quest of food for their repast,
Wherein hard labours sweet to her become,
On the open spray anticipates the time,
And with an ardent gaze awaits the sun,
Earnestly looking for the birth of day ;
So stood the Lady mine attentively "
And vigilant, towards that quarter¹ turned,
Beneath which his least speed displays the sun ;
So that I, seeing her eager in suspense,
Became like to a man who in desire
Longs for a thing, and in his hope delights.
Yet little space between the two times lapsed ;
I mean of mine expectance, and the sight
Of heaven that more and more resplendent grew.
And Beatrice said : " Behold the multitudes
Of Christ his triumph, and the fruitage all ' "

¹ The south. The sun appears to move the slowest when near the meridian.

Gathered within the circles of these spheres."
It seemed to me that all her countenance glowed;
And with delight she had her eyes so filled
That unrecounted I must pass it by.

As in the season of serene full-moon
Trivia² smiles among the eternal Nymphs,
Who deck the firmament in all its vaults;
Above a thousand lamps I now beheld
The sun illuminating all of them,
As does our own the things of upper sight;³
And through the living light transparent beamed
The lucid substance in such vivid sheen
Upon mine eyes, that I endured it not.

O Beatrice, my loved and tender guide!

She then to me: "This, which o'erpowers thee,
Is virtue with which none can be compared.
The Wisdom⁴ and the Power there exists,
Which opened up the way 'twixt Heaven and earth,
For which so long expectancy had been."
As lightning is discharged from out a cloud⁴⁰
Dilated more than it can longer hold,
And, 'gainst its nature, downwards falls to earth;
E'en so mine intellect, amid these joys
Grown larger, swelled beyond its proper self,
And knows not to recall what it became.

"Open thine eyes, and view me as I am;
Thou hast seen such things, that of potency
Art thou become now to sustain my smile."

² The Moon.

³ According to the belief (already alluded to Pa. xx. 6,) that all the stars derive their light from the sun.

⁴ Christ.

Like to a man was I, what time he wakes
 From unremembered visions, and who tries
 In vain to bring them back into his thoughts,
 When I this proffer heard, that worthy was
 Of such acceptance, as will never fade
 From out the volume which reviews the past.
 If all the languages could sound again,
 Which Polyhymnia with her sisters made
 With their most sweet milk more luxuriant,
 To aid me, to a thousandth of the truth
 They could not reach, singing the holy smile,
 And how it perfect made her sacred face.
 And thus, as I prefigure Paradise,
 My sacred poem here must take a leap,
 Like one who finds his road is cut away :
 But whoso thinks upon the weighty theme,
 And on the mortal shoulders charged with it,
 Will not upbraid, if under it they tremble.
 No voyage is it for a little bark,
 This which is opened by my daring prow,
 Nor for a sailor who himself would spare.

“ Enthralls thee since so much my countenance,
 Why dost thou not on the fair garden look,
 Which blossoms underneath the rays of Christ ?
 There is the Rose ⁵ in which the Word Divine
 Became Flesh ; and there also are the Lilies,⁶
 Following whose odour the good way is learned.”

Thus Beatrice ; and I, who to her counsel
 Was ever prompt, again applied myself
 Unto the struggle with my drooping lids.
 As in the sunlight, that is brightly poured
 From broken clouds, some time a flowery mead

⁵ The Virgin Mary.⁶ The Saints.

Mine eyes have¹ seen, themselves in shadow wrapt ;
Thus saw I many throngs of shining ones
Lighted by fulgent radiance from above,
Yet of that radiance could not see the source.

O Power benign, that dost impress them thus,
Thou didst exalt thyself to give me space
There for mine eyes that were not of fit strength.
The name of the fair Flower, which I invoke
Morning and evening, wholly occupied
My thoughts in looking for the greatest light :
And as depicted to me mine eyes twain
The form and brightness of that living star,
In heaven excelling, as she on earth excelled,
From out the sky a blazing meteor fell,
Shaped like a ring in figure of a crown,
And circled her, and round about her wheeled.
The melody which most delightful sounds
On earth, and towards it most attracts the soul,
Would seem a cloud that growls as it is rent,
Compared with the discoursing of that harp
By which was garlanded the Sapphire fair,
With which the brightest heaven is ingemmed.

“ I am the Love Angelic, which surrounds
The exalted joy, that from the womb is breathed,
Which was the abiding place of our Hope ;
And will surround, O Heavenly Lady, while
Thy Son thou followest, to make divine
Yet more, on entering it, the sphere supreme.”
On this wise the encircling melody
Received its seal, and all the other lights
The name of Mary did make resonant.
The royal mantling⁷ of all the volumes

⁷ The Primum Mobile, or Ninth Sphere.

Of the universe, that stronger glows and lives
In the close presence and the breath of God,
Upheld above us its interior side,
Distant, by such a space, that its appearance,
From whence I was, as yet could not be seen.
Wherefore mine eyes had not ability
To follow on that crown-encircled flame,
Which upwards soared and to its source drew near.¹⁷⁹
And like a little child, who to the breast,
After its fill of milk, extends the arms,
In love which thus is outwardly expressed,
Each of those splendours tended upwardly
So with its summit, that the deep affection
They had for Mary was to me disclosed.
Thereon within my vision they remained
Singing so pleasingly : "*Regina cæli* ; " ⁸
That from me never will the joy depart.

O how great is the plenteousness contained ¹⁸⁰
In those most wealthy treasure-chests, that were
On earth good husbandmen to sow the seed !
Rejoice they here, and on the treasure live,
That was acquired while they wept in exile
In Babylon,⁹ where they did leave their gold ;
Here triumphs, underneath the lofty Son
Of God and Mary, for his victory,
And with the Ancient Counsel and the New,
He,¹ of this glory who retains the keys.

⁸ " O Queen of Heaven "—the first words of a hymn to the Virgin.

⁹ During their earthly life.

¹ St. Peter with the other saints of the Old and New Testament.



CANTO XXIV.

ST. PETER — EXAMINATION ON FAITH

“O COMPANY to the great supper bid
Of the Blest Lamb, who sets before you food,
Such that your wants are ever satisfied :
Since by the grace of God this man foretastes
Of that, which from your table falls to ground,
Before death has assigned his period,
To his vast longing some attention give,
And shed some dew upon him : for ye drink
Aye from that spring, whence what he wishes flows.”

Thus Beatrice : and those rejoicing spirits¹⁰
Became as spheres revolving on fixed poles,
Like unto comets streaming forth bright light :
And as the train of wheels within a clock
Moves, and the first, if it be closely watched,
Seems to be motionless, the last to fly ;
Even in such manner these carollers,
Dancing in different measure, of their wealth
Afforded judgment by their speed or slowness.
From that, which I of greatest beauty marked,
I saw a flame stream of such blessedness,²⁰
That it exceeded all in purity :
And three times circling around Beatrice
It wheeled with so divine a minstrelsy,
As even fancy cannot trace again ;
So the pen skips it, and I write it not :
For our imagination in such depths,
E'en as our words are, is of too bright tint.'

" O blessed sister mine, who hast besought
Thus earnestly ; by thine affection strong
'Thou hast detached me from this beauteous sphere :'³⁰
After the blessed flame was come to rest,
His breath unto my Lady he poured forth,
Speaking in manner as above is told.
And she : " O Light eterne of that great man,
To whom our Saviour bequeathed the keys,
Which he on earth bore, of this marvellous joy ;
Examine this man in points slight or grave,
As pleases thee, in what concerns the Faith,
Through which thou didst upon the waters walk.
If he loves rightly, rightly hopes, believes;⁴⁰
From thee is not hid, for thou canst see there,
Where everything may be depicted seen.

¹ A metaphor from painting ; in which bright colours are not fit to represent the folds of drapery, or other deep portions of a picture.

But since this kingdom gains its citizens
By the true Faith, to give it glory due
"Twere good that of it he should have to speak."

As arms himself the Bachelor,² nor speaks,
Until the Master has the question put,
Not for decision, but for argument;
Thus with all reasonings I armed myself,
The while she spoke, that I might be prepared, "
For such a querist, and profession such.

"Speak, O good Christian, and declare thyself;
What is the Faith?" whereon I raised my face
Towards the luminary whence this came;
Then turned to Beatrice and she a quick
Signal made to me, that I should pour forth
The water from mine inner fountain-head.

"The grace which has accorded me this shrift
By the great Captain," thus did I begin,
"May it permit my thoughts to be expressed!" "
And I continued: "As the truthful pen
Of thy dear brother, O my father, wrote,
Who with thee led Rome into the right path;
Faith is the substance of things that are hoped,³
And is the evidence of things not seen;
And this to me its essence seems to be."
Thereon I heard: "Correctly thou dost hold,
If rightly thou perceivest why he rests it
On substance first, and then on evidence."

Followed I after then: "The things profound, "
Which of their sight have made me largess here,

² When disputing in the University Schools. St. Peter taking the place of the Master or Moderator in a Scholastic disputation.

³ Hebrews xi. 1.

Are so concealed from eyes of men on earth,
'That their existence wholly lies in faith,
On which is founded our exalted hope ;
Wherefore the name of substance it assumes :
But of this faith, there, of necessity
We must discourse without a further view ;
Wherefore it takes the name of evidence."

Thereon I heard : " If all that is received
On earth as doctrine, were thus understood, 80
The sophist's art would there obtain no place."
Thus was breathed forth from out that kindled love ;
Then added he : " Sufficiently is tried
By this the weight and alloy of this coin ;
But say if thou hast of it in thy purse."
Then I : " Yes, I have it so round and bright,
'That of its mintage not one makes me doubt."

Upon this issued from the inner light
Which there was shining : " 'This gem of great price,
Upon which every virtue is bestowed, 90
Whence comes it ?" and I : " The abundant rain
Which from the Holy Spirit is poured forth
Upon the parchment, ancient and the new,
The reasoning is, which has established it
With such conviction, that compared with it
To lack edge seem all other arguments."

'Then I heard this : " The ancient and the new
Parts of the reasoning which have so convinced,
Why dost thou as the Word Divine accept ?"
And I : " The proof, which has revealed the truth, 100
Is in the works that followed, for which nature
The iron nor heated, nor the anvil struck."
Then was replied to me : " Say, what the proof
That these works ever took place ? for the same

Which thou to prove art seeking, tells thee them."

"To Christianity if the world had turned,"

I said, "without the miracles, this one

Is such, the rest are not its hundredth part ;

Namely, that poor and fasting thou didst enter

Upon the field to sow the goodly plant,

Which once a vine, is now to brambles turned."

110

When this was done, the high and holy throng
Sounded through all the spheres: "We praise thee, God!"

In melody such as on high is sung.

Whereon the Chief, who thus from bough to bough

In his examining had led so far

'That to the farthest branches we approached,

Began again: "The Grace which dominates

Over thy mind, has made to ope thy mouth ;

Up to this time, as it becomes to open ;

And I approve what forth from it has flowed ;

But thou must now confess what is thy creed,

And why it was commended to thy faith."

111

"O holy father, O spirit that dost see
What thou didst so believe, thou didst surpass
More youthful feet to reach the sepulchre,"

Thus I began then, "thou wouldst have me show

The formulary of my prompt belief,

Also the reason for it thou dost seek.

I answer thus: In one God I believe,

Sole and eternal, who moves all the spheres,

Himself unmoved, by love and appetite ;

And of this faith not only have I proofs

Physic and metaphysic, but persuades

Also the truth which was from hence rained down

By Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms,

112

⁴ John came first to the sepulchre ; but Peter went in first. (John
xx. 6.)

By the Evangels, and by you who wrote,
After the Holy Spirit made you blest.
In Persons Three eterne believe I, these
One Essence I believe, so one, so trine, 140
That *sunt* and *est* ⁶ they equally sustain.
Of this deep being of divinity,
Of which I now speak, has convinced my mind
The Gospel doctrine in full many texts.
This is the principle, this is the spark
Which afterwards into a bright flame spreads,
And, like a star in heaven, shines in me."

E'en as the Lord who hears what pleases him,
His messenger embraces, in his joy
At his intelligence, when he has done ; 150
So pouring blessings on me in his song,
Three times encircled me, when I had ceased,
The Apostolic light, at whose command
I spoke ; so had I pleased him by my words.

⁶ *are* and *is*.

CANTO XXV.

ST. JAMES.—EXAMINATION ON HOPE.—ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

IF e'er it happens that this sacred strain,
To which both heaven and earth have lent their aid,
And which for many years has kept me thin,
Should overcome the hate which locks me out
From the fair sheep-fold,¹ where I slept a lamb
By the wolves hated who make war on it ;
Then with another voice, with other fleece
I should return a poet, and at the font
Of my baptizing should assume the wreath ;
Because into the Faith, which does make known
The souls to God, I entered there, and since
Peter for this did so wheel round my sight.²

10

A light advanced towards us afterwards
From out that company, whence came the first
Among his Vicars whom Christ left behind :
And full of joyousness the Lady mine
Said to me : “ Look, behold there is the Chief
For whom on earth Galicia is sought.”³
In manner such as when the dove alights

¹ Florence.

² See last Canto, v. 152.

³ In the pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. James at Compostella.

Near to his mate, the one and other show
Their love by cooings and by wheeling flights ;
So I beheld one to the other great
And glorious chieftain salutation give,
Praising the meat on which above they feed.
But when their greetings to an end were come,
Silent, before me, each of them stood fixed
So incandescent that it quelled my sight.
Thereon spoke Beatrice, and smiled the while :
“ Illustrious soul, by whom the bounteousness
Of our Basilica has been described,
Let Hope be made within this height to sound :
Thou know’st that thou didst figure it as oft
As Jesus showed his greatest light to three.”⁴
“ Raise up thy head, and be thou of good cheer ;
For what mounts hither from the mortal world,
It is most fit, should ripen in our rays.”
‘ This consolation from the second flame
Reached me ; and I mine eyes raised to the hills,
Which erst had pressed them with too great a load.
“ Since that thou shouldst meet, in his favour wills “
Our Emperor, before thy time of death,
In his most secret chamber with his peers,
So that the truth of this court being seen,
Hope that on earth inspires with right love,
In thee and others may of this assure ;
Of what it is, and how of it bears bloom
Thy mind, and whence on thee it was bestowed ; ”
Thus in addition said the second light :
And that devout one, who had steered the plumes
Of my wings in so highly pitched a flight,
Anticipated me in answer thus :

⁴ Peter, James, and John alone witnessed the Transfiguration : so also the miraculous draught of fishes (Luke, v. 4), and the raising of Jairus’ daughter (Mark, v. 37), upon which occasions they have been taken to represent Faith, Hope, and Charity.

"None other son has the church Militant
 Gifted with more of Hope; and thus is writ
 Upon the Sun which lights up all our host;
 Wherefore to him is granted, that from Egypt^a
 To see it, he should reach Jerusalem,
 Before his militance is come to end.
 The other two points, which not for instruction^b
 Are asked of him, but that he may relate
 How much this virtue gives thee of delight,
 I leave to him; they are not difficult,
 Nor are self-boasting; let him answer them;
 And may God's favour grant to him this thing."^c

Like scholar who upon his teacher waits
 Ready and willing where he is prepared,
 In order that his merit may appear:
 "Hope," said I, "is the expectation sure
 Of future glory, which has been called forth
 By grace divine and virtues gone before."^d
 From many stars this light to me arrives;
 But he was first to infuse it in my heart
 Who was the singer chief of the chief Guide,
 'They will in thee hope,' in his song divine
 He says, 'who come to knowledge of thy name;'^e
 And who can know it not, who has my faith?
 Thou hast distilled upon me with his dew
 In thine Epistle, so that I am full,
 And upon others overflows thy rain."^f

While I was speaking, in the living breast
 Of that illumination glanced a light
 Sudden and swift as is the lightning-flash;
 From it was said: "The love with which I blaze

^a From earth to heaven.

^b From Peter Lombard, Sentences, iii. 26.

^c Psalms of David, ix. 10.

Yet for the virtue, which has followed me
 To victory, and till I left the field,
 Bids me speak with thee of what gives thee joy
 In it; and it were pleasing thou shouldst tell
 What is it which Hope promises to thee."
 And I: "The ancient Scriptures and the new
 Afford the proof, (and this too points to it),
 Of souls to whom God has been reconciled :
 Isaiah says that every one invested
 Shall in their land be of a double vest ;⁸
 And their land is this life of blessedness,
 And very fully does thy brother⁹ treat,
 In that place, where he speaks of the white robes,
 The revelation here made manifest."

97

Before these last words to an end had come,
 "*Sperent in te*"¹ was heard as from above,
 To which the circling groups all made response :
 Then from among them there blazed forth a light,¹⁰⁰
 Such, that if Cancer² such an orb possessed,
 Winter would have one month of day alone.
 And as arises, moves, and joins the dance
 Some joyous girl, only that she may grace
 The bride, and not for any vanity ;
 So I beheld the light,³ which had burst forth,
 Approach the two who circled in a wheel,
 As was most fitting to their ardent love.
 He entered on their measure and their song ;

⁸ Isaiah. lxi. 7. In their land they shall possess the double : everlasting joy shall be unto them. v. 10. He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.

⁹ St. John in Revelations, vii. 9.

¹ "They will hope in thee." Psalm ix. 10 ; already quoted, v. 73.

² The sun being in Capricorn for a month at the Winter Solstice, the opposite sign Cancer is then always above the horizon when the sun is below it ; and if there was in Cancer, as it were, a second sun, there would be a whole month of daylight.

³ St. John, who joins St. Peter and St. James.

And on them held her looks the Lady mine,
Silent and motionless as is a bride.

“This one is he who lay upon the breast
Of our Pelican ; and this one is he
From off the cross to the great duty charged.”
Thus spoke the Lady mine ; nor any more.
Her gaze from fixed attention did relax,
After his words than she before had done.
Like to a man who gazes, in intent
To see the sun when partially eclipsed,
And who, to see, becomes deprived of sight ;
Before this last flame such did I become,
While thus was said : “ Why dost thou strain the eye
To see a thing which here has not a place ?
On earth is earth my body, and will be
With all the rest until our complement
Is even made with the Eternal Will.
With the two vests ⁴ within the blessed cloister,
Are only the two Lights who have ascended ;
And from your earth this body I shall bring.”
Upon these words the incandescent wheel
Returned to quiet with the mingling sweet,
Made by the accents of the triple breath ;
As when, to ease their toil, or at some danger
The oars which erst upon the water struck,
At sound of whistle all are brought to rest.

Ah ! how much in my mind was I disturbed,
When I turned round to look on Beatrice,
And when I saw her not, although I was
Placed close beside her in the happy world.

⁴ St. John “leaned on Jesus’ bosom” (John, xiii. 28), and to his care the mother of Jesus was given (John, xix. 25.)

⁵ The glory of the soul, and of the body after resurrection ; only enjoyed by Christ and by the Virgin (according to the belief of the church of Rome in her Assumption), until the general resurrection.

CANTO XXVI.

ST. JOHN.—EXAMINATION ON CHARITY.—ADAM.

WHILE I was doubting, with my sight o'ercome,
From the bright flame which had extinguished it
Issued a voice, which to it made me hearken,
Saying : " Until thou shalt regain thy sense
Of sight which thou upon me hast consumed,
'Twere well by converse to seek recompence.
Begin then, and in what direction turns
Thy mind, and be thou well assured that is
In thee thy vision in amaze, not dead ;
Because the Lady, who through this divine
Region conducts thee, has in her regard
'The virtue which the hand of Ananias ¹ had."
I said : " At her own pleasure, soon or late,
May come the cure to eyes that were the doors,
When entered she with flame that burns me aye.
The Good, which happy makes to be this court,
Is the Alpha and Omega of the text
Which Love ² reads to me, lightly or with force."
The selfsame voice which the astonishment
Of the swift dazzling from me had removed,

¹ Who restored St. Paul's sight, Acts, ix. 17.

² Or charity, according to the English version.

Again to conversation turned my thoughts ;
 And said : " For certain, in a finer sieve
 Thou must be sifted ; and thou must declare
 Who did thy bow direct to such a mark."

And I : " By philosophic arguments,
 And by authority, which hence descends,
 Upon me such Love did itself imprint ;
 For the good, good as it is understood,
 Thus excites love, and by so much the more,
 As in it more of goodness it contains. 30

Whence to the Essence, (which is so supreme
 That every good which is externe to it,
 No other is than of its light a ray,)
 More than to any other, must incline
 The soul, in love, of each man who perceives
 The truth on which is based this argument.
 Makes clear this truth unto mine intellect
 He * who displays to me the primal love
 Of all the sempiternal substances.

The voice of that true Author makes it clear, 40
 Who said to Moses, speaking of himself :
 Before thee I will make my Goodness pass.⁴
 Thou too hast made it clear, when opening⁵
 The high announcement which the mystery tells
 From hence to earth 'bove other heraldings."

And I heard : " By the human intellect,
 And by authority therewith concordant,
 Reserve the chiefest of thy love for God.
 But say again if thou feel other cords 50
 Draw thee towards him, so that thou mayst tell
 With teeth how many this love seizes thee."

* Probably Plato in the Banquet, where he says that Love is among the eldest of beings, and being the eldest, is the cause of the greatest

⁴ Exodus, xxxiii. 19.

⁵ "In the beginning was the Word," &c., John, i. 1.

The holy meaning was not from me hid
 Of Christ's own eagle,⁶ and I was aware
 To what point my profession he would lead.
 Wherefore again began I: "All the holds,
 That can compel the heart to turn to God,
 Have been concurrent to produce my Love;
 Because the world's existence, and my own;
 The death He underwent, that I might live;
 And what, as I do, all believers hope;
 With the before said lively recognition,
 Have drawn me from the sea of wrested love,
 And landed me upon the shore of right.
 The leaves, with which the garden all is green
 Of the eternal Gardener, I love,
 Much as from him to them is sent of good."
 Soon as I silent was, a most sweet song
 Through heaven resounded, and the Lady mine
 Said with the others: "Holy, Holy, Holy."

60

And as at a bright light a man awakes,
 Because the spirits visual resort
 Towards the glare which spreads from coat to coat,⁷
 And the roused man shrinks back from what he sees;
 So ignorant is sudden wakefulness,
 Until the faculty of judgment aids;
 Thus all impurities from out mine eyes
 With radiance of hers did Beatrice chase,
 Which sent their splendour for a thousand miles;
 After which saw I better than before,
 And in astonishment I question made
 Concerning a fourth light I saw with us.
 And said the Lady mine: "Within those rays
 In joy looks on his Maker the first soul,
 Which the First Power ever did create."

70

80

⁶ The usual emblem of St. John, put for himself. ⁷ Of the eye.

Like to the leaf which downward bends its point
At the wind's passage, and then springs again
By its own property which raises it,
So did I, in the time the while she spoke,
In marvel, and again so made me firm
A wish to speak by which I was inflamed ;
And I began : " O apple, that mature
Alone wast brought forth, father ancient,
To whom each bride is daughter-in-law and child,
Devotedly as may be I entreat
That thou wouldst speak with me ; thou seest my wish ;
I speak it not, that I may sooner hear."

As stirs an animal when covered up,
And its emotion chances to be seen
By the attendant movement of the cloth ;
In such like manner did the Primal Soul
Show me transparent through his covering,
How gladly he my pleasure undertook.
Then he breathed forth : " Without to me being shown
By thee, I better can discern thy wish,
Than thou the thing which is to thee most sure ;
For I behold it in the Mirror true
Which in its image fashions other things,
But no thing to its image fashions it.
Thou wouldst know when it was that God placed me
Within that lofty garden, in which she
Prepared thee for a stair so long as this ;
And how long its delight was for mine eyes ;
And the true reason of the mighty wrath ;
And of the language which I made and used.
Now, O my son, not eating of the tree
Was of such banishment itself the cause,
But only the transgression of the law.
In that place whence thy Lady Virgil fetched,
Four thousand, and three hundred and two turns

Of the sun longed I for this company ;
 And him I saw return to all the lights
 Upon his path nine hundred and thrice ten
 Times, in the period I was on earth.

120

“ The language, which I spoke, was quite worn out
 Before unto the work impossible
 The race of Nimrod had their labour turned ;
 For no production of the intellect
 Which is renewed at pleasure of mankind,
 Following the sky, was durable for aye.
 It is a natural thing that man should speak ;
 But whether this or that way, nature leaves
 To your election, as it pleases you.
 Ere I descended on the infernal road,
 Upon earth, EL was called the Highest Good,
 From whom the enjoyment flows that me surrounds ;
 And was called ELI after ⁸ ; as was meet :
 For mortal usages are like a leaf
 Upon a bough, which goes, and others come.
 On the Mount rising highest from the waves
 I was in life, or pure, or when corrupt,
 From the first hour, to that which second is
 To the sixth hour, when shifts the sun its quadrant.”

130

140

⁸ Dante cites this as an instance of the change which had taken place in the primæval language, even before the confusion of Babel. He is supposed to have followed a passage in Isidore's *Etymologies* (vii. 1.) which says that El was the earliest name of God among the Hebrews, and Eli, the second.

⁹ Dividing the day into twelve hours from 6 A. M. to 6 P. M. the sixth hour is at noon, when the sun is on the meridian ; from which it passes into the other quadrant of that portion of its circular orbit which is above the horizon ; and the hour second to, or following the sixth, is the seventh. According to an ancient tradition, Adam was only seven hours in the earthly Paradise, here referred to as being upon the summit of the mountain of Purgatory.



CANTO XXVII.

ST PETER—THE BLUSH OF HEAVEN.—ASCENT TO THE NINTH
SPHERE, OR PRIMUM MOBILE.

To Father, Son, and to the Holy Ghost
 Began give glory all of Paradise,
 So that the sweet song filled me with delight.
 What I beheld now seemed to be a smile
 Of the Universe ; and at this, my delight
 By seeing and by hearing entrance made.
 O Joy ! beatitude ineffable !
 O Life made up of peacefulness and love !
 O Riches, free from care, without a wish !

Before mine eyes the four resplendences¹
 Stood kindled, and that one who came the first,

¹ St. Peter, St. James, St. John, and Adam.

Began to show a greater brilliancy ;
 And in his semblance such did he become,
 As Jupiter might be, if he and Mars
 Were birds, and had their plumages exchanged.²
 The Providence which in that place assigns
 Seasons and duties, to the blessed choir
 Had silence bidden upon every side,
 When I heard : " In my colour if I change
 Do not thou marvel ; for the while I speak,
 Thou wilt see all of these their colour change.
 He³ that usurps upon my place on earth,
 My place, my place, which is in vacancy
 Before the presence of the Son of God,
 Has of my sepulchre a sewer made
 Of blood and filth, whereat that rebel One,
 Who from above fell, is below well pleased."

With such a tint, as to the opposing sun,
 A cloud presents at morning or at eve,
 I now beheld the heavens overspread.
 And like a modest lady who abides
 For herself fearless, but for others' fault,
 At only hearing it, is trembling seen,
 In such wise Beatrice her countenance changed ;
 And such eclipse I think in heaven was,
 When Power Supreme the Passion underwent ;
 Proceeded onwards thereon his discourse
 In voice that from itself so much was changed,
 That his appearance was not more transformed :
 " The spouse of Christ had not the fostering
 Of my blood, and of Linus', and of Cletus',⁴
 That she should be accustomed to seek gold ;
 But for the seeking of this blissful life,
 Sixtus, and Pius, Calixtus, Urbanus,⁵

² Changing a white light for a red.⁴ Early Bishops of Rome and martyrs.³ The Pope.

w w 9

After much sorrow did their blood expend.
Our meaning was not, that at the right hand
Of our successor there should sit one part
Of the Christian people, at the other, part;
Nor that the keys, which were to me consigned,
Should of a standard be the blazoning
'That is against baptized men borne in fight;
Nor that I should become the seal's device
Of false and marketed indulgences,
Whereat I often blush, and pale my light.
In shepherd's clothing the rapacious wolves
From hence are seen in all the pasture-grounds.
O Vengeance of the Lord, why dost thou sleep!
Of our blood, they of Cahors and Gascony^{*}
To drink make ready; O beginning good
To what vile ending must thou downward sink!
But the high Providence which with Scipio
Secured to Rome the glory of the world,
Will come to rescue soon, as I conceive.
And thou, my son, who with thy mortal load
Below wilt hence return, uncloseth thy mouth
Nor conceal thou what I do not conceal."

As when with vapours, that are frozen, snows
Downwards our atmosphere, what time[†] the horn
Of the sky's goat is with the sun conjoined;
Upwards I so beheld the ether decorate
Become, and with triumphant vapours snow,
Who with us there some sojourning had made.
On their appearance did mine eyesight wait,
And followed till the medium, in its depth,
Prevented them from being longer seen;
Whereon the Lady, who perceived me spent

^{*} Pope John 21st. (1316), was a native of Cahors. Clement 5th (1305), was a Gascon.

[†] In mid winter, when the sun is in Capricorn.

With gazing upwards, said to me : " Bring down
Thy looks, and note how thou hast been borne round."

Since that hour when my gaze I bent at first,
I found that I had moved through all the arc ⁶⁰
Formed by the first clime from its mid to end ;
On that side Cadiz I could see the mad
Course of Ulysses, and on this the shore,⁸
On which Europa was so sweet a burden ;
And further yet had been disclosed the site
Of this small plot ; but forwards was the sun,
Under my feet, a sign and more removed.⁹
'The mind enamoured, which found its delight
At all times with my Lady, to bring back
To her mine eyes was more than ever bent. ⁶⁰
And if or art or nature pasture makes
'To catch the eyes for seizure of the mind,
In mortal flesh, or in its portraitures,
All these conjoined as nothing would appear
By the divine joy which upon me shone,
What time I turned me to her smiling face.
And that Power, which indulged me with this glance,

⁷ Dante has been six hours in Gemini ; and has been carried with the motion of the heavens through ninety degrees, from the meridian of Jerusalem (Pa. xxii. 153), to the meridian of the extreme west of the known earth. The ancient geographers divided the earth into seven " climates " by circles parallel to the equator. The " first clime " (called also the climate of Meröe), was twenty degrees to the north of the equator ; and extended one hundred and eighty degrees (the whole supposed extent of the earth from ocean to ocean), and would be nearly bisected by the meridian of Jerusalem. Gemini is also about twenty degrees to the north of the equator ; and Dante's motion with that sign, corresponds with ninety degrees measured on the earth's surface, from the middle, to the western extremity of the first climate. See the Map at p. 342.

⁸ Of Phœnicia ; whence Europa was carried off by Jupiter in the form of a bull.

⁹ Dante is viewing the earth (the " small plot " of v. 86) from Gemini, and the sun is in Aries with Taurus interposed. Hence, the whole of the earth's hemisphere visible from Gemini is not illuminated by the sun's rays ; but the earth so seen would appear something like the moon at five days after the full ; and Dante cannot see the dark part.

From the fair nest ¹ of Leda carried me,
And to the swiftest heaven bore me on.
Its parts, as being the highest and most quick, 100
Are all so uniform, I cannot tell
Which Beatrice had chosen for my place.
But she, who saw my curiosity,
Began thus, smiling so rejoicingly
That in her countenance God seemed to joy :

“The nature of the motion, which keeps still
The centre, but whirls all the rest around,
From hence commences as its boundary.
And this heaven has no other place in space
Than the Divine Mind, within which there burns 110
The Love which turns it, and the Power it sheds.
Light and Love comprehend it in one sphere,
As this the others ; and this circumference
He who surrounds it, only understands.
Its motion is not by the others marked ;
But all the others measured are by this,
As ten is by its half, or by its fifth.
And how time fixes within such a vase
His roots, and in the rest his foliage,
Now may appear to thee as manifest. 120
O Covetousness, that o’erwhelmest men
Beneath thee, so that none the power has
From out thy waters to lift up his eyes !
In men the will might flourish excellent,
But that the rain continual transmutes
The true plums into withered empty prunes.
For faith and innocence are to be found
In children only ; and each afterwards
Takes flight before the cheeks their vesture gain.
One while a prattler yet, observes the fasts, 130

¹ From Gemini—Castor and Pollux being the sons of Leda.

Who after, when his tongue is free, will eat
Of every food, and throughout every month ;
And one, a prattler, loves and listens to
His mother, who with perfect power of speech,
Will after long to see her in her grave.
Becomes on this wise blackened the fair skin,
From her first entrance, of the daughter² fair
Of him who brings the morning, leaves the night.
Thou, that it may not cause thee marvelling,
Know that on earth to govern there is none ;
Hence goes astray the human family.
But ere all January leaves the winter,
Through that neglected fraction³ on the earth,
These upper spheres will so cry out aloud,
That Fortune, looked for during such long time,
Will turn the poops where now are seen the prows,
So that the fleet directed right will move ;
And true fruit to the blossom will succeed.”

140

² The life of man is called the daughter of the sun. See Pa. xxii. 116.

³ The 11 minutes and $8\frac{1}{10}$ seconds, by which the assumed year of 365 days and 6 hours of the Julian Calendar, exceeds the length of the true astronomical year. The accumulated error amounted to 10 days when the Calendar was reformed by the Gregorian adjustment in 1582 : and if not corrected it would in time derange the places of the months in the seasons. Ironically, a very long period is used to express a very short one, and to indicate that the expected improvement in the world, by the recognition of the right of the Emperor to govern, is close at hand.

CANTO XXVIII.

THE HIERARCHIES OF THE HEAVENLY HOST

WHEN had, against the now-existing life
Of miserable mortals, shown the truth,
She, who imparadises my regards ;
As in a looking-glass a taper's flame
He sees who from behind is lighted by it,
Before he has it in his sight or thought,
And around turns to notice if the glass
'Tells him the truth ; and sees that it agrees
With it, as notes of music with their time :
Even so recollects my memory
'That I did, looking back on the fair eyes,
Of which Love made his cord for taking me :
And as I turned me round, and as were touched
Mine by what in that Volume ¹ does appear,
When rightly on its circle men will look,
I saw a point which radiated light
So piercing, that the sight on which it streams,
Must from its great intensity be closed.
And like the star which seems from hence the least,
The moon would show if she were placed by this
In the same way as star with star is placed.

¹ The Ninth Heaven.

Perhaps so far, as seems to be removed
 The halo girdling round the light it dyes,
 When is most dense the mist which carries it,
 Distant, around the point, an orb of fire
 So swiftly rolled, that it would have surpassed
 The quickest motion which surrounds the earth ;
 And by another this was circled round,
 That by a third, and by a fourth the third,
 The fourth one by a fifth, that by a sixth.
 Above, the seventh followed, spread so far
 Abroad in width, that Juno's messenger ²
 Complete to span it would too narrow be.
 So too the eighth and ninth ; and each of these
 The slower moved, according as it was
 In number more removed from unity.
 And that one had its flame most perfected,
 From which the pure spark was at distance least,
 I think because it most partakes of it.

The Lady mine, who saw me through my doubts
 In much suspense, said to me : " From that point
 The heavens and the whole of nature hang.
 Look on that circle nearest joined with it,
 And be informed its motion is so swift,
 By the enkindled love which urges it."
 And I to her : " If were arranged the world
 In order such as in these orbs I note,
 What is before me would have satisfied ;
 But in the world of sense the custom is
 To observe that things are so much more divine,
 As from the centre they are more removed.³
 Whence that my curiosity may cease

² Iris, the Rainbow.

³ The Earth being in the centre, and the Empyrean being the most distant sphere ; whereas in the exhibition of the Angelic Hierarchy now seen, the Source of Power is in the centre, and the highest order of Angels is nearest to it.

In this angelical and wondrous fane,
Which for its bounds has only Love and Light,
More must I hear why the original
And transcript the same method follow not ;
For I in vain contemplate this alone."

"If thine own fingers are not for such knot
Sufficient found, it is not wonderful,
For want of trying, it is grown so firm :"
So far my Lady ; then she said : "Accept
What I shall tell thee, if thou wouldst be filled,
And exercise thy mind concerning it.

"The orbs corporeal are wide or strait,
According to the virtue more or less,
Which is extended throughout all their parts.
The greater goodness wills to do more good ;
And this more good a greater substance holds,
If equally it has its portions filled.
Therefore this one, which altogether whirls
With it the upper universe, responds
To that orb which most loves, and which most knows.
Whence to the goodness if thou wilt apply
Thy measure, and not to the outward show
Of these Existences in circles seen,
The wonderful agreement thou wilt note
Of more with greater, and of less with less,
In every sphere, to its intelligence."

Like as is left serene and shining bright
The hemisphere of air, what time does blow,
From that cheek which is gentlest, Boreas,
Because are melted and dispersed the mists,
Which erst disturbed it, so that heaven smiles
With the embellishment of all its train ;
Such became I, so soon as gave to me
The Lady mine her answer evident,

And, like a star in heaven, the truth was seen.
And soon as ever her discourse surceased,
No other than as iron scintillates
When molten, did the circles give off sparks. 90
Its track of fire followed every flake,
And there were so many, that their amount
Beyond the doubling of the chess-squares rose.⁴

I heard "Hosannah" sung from choir to choir
'To the fixed point, which holds them to their *where*,
And aye will hold, in which they aye will be ;
And she, who saw the hesitating thoughts
Within my mind, said to me : "The first orbs
Have shown thee Seraphim and Cherubim.
Thus rapid their attachments they pursue, 100
Much as they can to grow alike the Point,
And so far can they, as they see on high.
The other Loves, which round about these move,
Are called the Thrones of the Divine Regard,
Because the primal Ternary they close.
And thou shouldst know that all of these have joy
According as their vision is profound
Into the Truth in which all minds find rest.
Hence may be known that its foundation has
The blest existence in the act of sight, 110
And not in that of love which follows it ;
And the extent of vision is the meed,
'To which good-will and grace have given birth ;
Proceeds it onwards thus from grade to grade.
The other ternary, that flourishes
In this eternal season of the spring,

⁴ This is in allusion to the well-known story of the reward asked from the King of Persia by the inventor of the game of chess, who wanted a grain of wheat for the first square of the board, two for the second, and so on. The number arrived at on the last or sixty-fourth square by this process of duplication, extends to twenty places of figures.

Which Aries^{*} by night ne'er ravages,
 For ever sings Hosannah in spring notes
 With triple melodies, heard in the three
 Orders of joy of which it is made up. 140
 Within this Hierarchy there are three gods,
 First Dominations, Virtues after them ;
 And the third series of Powers consists.
 Afterwards, in the two choirs last but one,
 Archangels wheel and Principalities:
 'The last is all of Angels' revelry.
 These orders upwards all of them regard,
 And downwards so prevail, that unto God
 All are attracted, and they all attract.
 And Dionysius⁶ with such desire 145
 Applied himself to contemplate these ranks,
 That he, as I, named and distinguished them.
 But from him Gregory⁷ differed afterwards ;
 Wherefore, so soon as opened he his eyes
 Within this heaven, at himself he smiled.
 And that so great a hidden truth proclaimed
 A mortal on the earth, be not surprised ;
 For he,⁸ who above saw it, told it him
 With other truths which to these spheres belong."

* At the approach of the cold season, at the Autumnal Equinox, when the Sun is in Libra, the opposite sign Aries, presides over the night, during which the frosts are most destructive.

⁶ In the work on the Celestial Hierarchy, ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite.

⁷ Gregory the Great arranged the orders of angels somewhat differently from Dionysius.

⁸ St. Paul, who was supposed to have communicated to his disciple Dionysius, the knowledge acquired by him when caught up into heaven. (2 Cor. xii. 2.)

CANTO XXIX.

THE CREATION AND FALL OF THE ANGELS—THE ANGELIC
NATURE—ERRORS OF PHILOSOPHY AND THE CHURCH

What time the children of Latona twain,¹
When by the Balance and the Ram possessed,
Make of the horizon at one time a belt ;
Long as is from the point which holds them poised,
Until both one and other from that band,
Changing their hemispheres, detach themselves ;
So long, with features painted with a smile,
Silent was Beatrice, the while she gazed,
Fixed on the point, which had o'erpowered me,
Then she began : “ I tell and do not ask
What thou wouldst hear, because I have it seen,
Where every *When* and every *Where* is fixed.
Not to increase its own perfectionment,
Which is not possible ; but that its splendour
Might in its shining forth proclaim, I am :
In self eternity beyond time's bounds,
Beyond all comprehension, as seemed good,
Displayed itself in new Loves, Love Eternal :
Not that inactive at the first it lay ;

¹ When the sun and moon are opposite, in Aries and Libra, and, as one is rising and the other is setting, are on the horizon together for a moment only.

For nor *before* nor *after* did take place ² 20
 God's moving to and fro upon these waters.
 Form and Material, or conjoined, or pure,
 Proceeded to the act ³ which had no fault,
 As triple arrows from a three-stringed bow ;
 And as in crystal, amber, or in glass
 The light so shines, that from its first approach,
 To its being all, there is no interval,
 On this wise the triform act of its Lord
 Upon its being shone together all,
 Without distinction of exordium. 25
 At the same time a rank was framed and made
 Among these Beings, and these were the top
 In the universe, in which pure Act was shown.
 The base held pure Potentiality ;
 Between, Potentiality joined Act
 With union such, they never will dispart.⁴
 Jerome ⁵ has writ for you a treatise long
 How Angels many ages were created,
 Ere the remainder of the world was made.
 But this truth has been writ in many texts 30
 By them who from the Holy Spirit wrote :
 And thou wilt see it, if thou closely look :
 And even reason something of it sees,
 Which will not suffer that the Moving Powers
 Without their perfectness so long should be.
 Now thou hast knowledge where and when these Loves

² That is, not in *time* ; which had no place in the Eternal Mind ; and before the existence of created beings.

³ The act of creation, which is described as instantaneous.

⁴ The Angels, the Animal creation, and Matter belong respectively to pure Act, Act joined with Potentiality, and pure Potentiality.

⁵ St. Jerome held the Angels to have been created long before the material world. Thomas Aquinas was of a different opinion (which is here maintained as true,) arguing that the angels would thus have lacked their perfection, which could not subsist apart from the full perfection of the whole design of the universe, to which they were to contribute as the movers of the heavenly spheres. Summa, i. 61, 3.

Created were and why ; so that burnt out
In thy desire already are three flames.
Not far as twenty, counting, couldst thou reach
So quickly, as one portion of the Angels, 50
Disturbed the lowest of your elements.
The rest remained, and this pursuit began,
Which thou beholdest, with so much delight
That never from their orbit they depart.
The reason of the Fall, was the accurst
Ambition of that One whom thou hast seen
Compressed by all the masses of the earth.
These, whom thou seest here, had humility
To acknowledge their dependence on the Good,
Which had ordained them apt to know so much ; 60
Wherefore their sight was lifted up on high
By Grace Illuminating, and by Worth,
So that they have a full and stedfast Will.
And I would have thee certain be, nor doubt,
Receipt of Grace is meritorious,
Even as for it the affection opens.

“ And now, as touching this consistory,
Well thou mayst comprehend, if my discourse
Has been well noted, without other aid.
But since upon the earth throughout your schools, 70
It is laid down that the Angelic nature
Is such that it remembers, knows, and wills ;
I will tell further, that thou mayst see pure
The truth, which is confounded in the world,
Ambiguously speaking in this creed.
These Beings, for that they their pleasure had
Before the face of God, ne’er turned their sight
From off it, from which nothing is concealed ;
Whence, interrupted they have not their sight
By a fresh object, and hence have no need 80
To use a memory for divided thoughts :

So that on earth they dream, though not asleep,
Believing some, some not, that they tell truth;
And in the latter is most fault and shame.

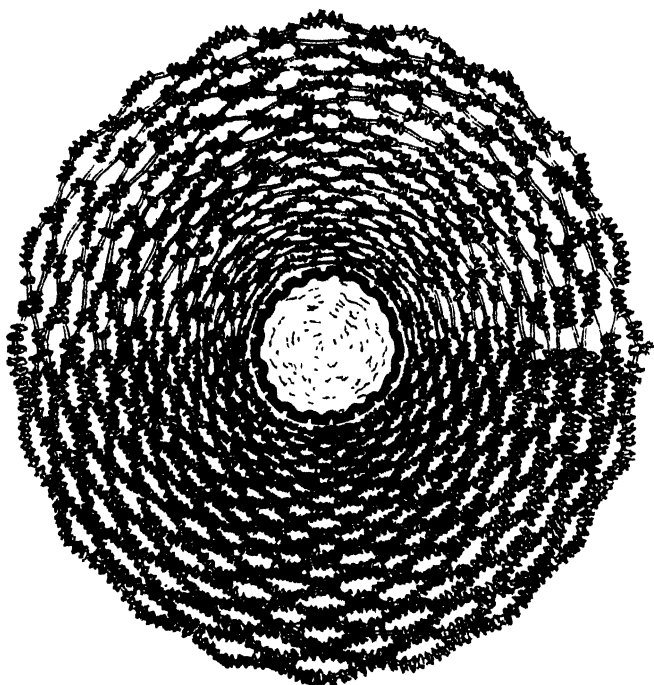
“ Ye go not in the world along a path
Philosophising; so much draws aside
The love of outward show, and thought for it :
And even this in Heaven is endured
With lesser wrath than when neglected are
The holy Scriptures, or when they are warped. ⁹¹
They do not recollect what blood it cost
To sow them in the world, nor how it pleases
When men will humbly go along with them.
For sake of show each strains his wit, and makes
His own inventions; and these are the talk
Of preachers, but the Gospel nothing says.
One gives out that the moon went back again
During Christ's Passion time, and interposed ;
Wherefore to earth the sun's light could not reach ;
And he lies ; one, that thus hid was the light ¹⁰⁰
Of itself, whence to Spaniards and to Indians
As well as Hebrews, this eclipse appeared.
Bindi and Lapi ⁶ Florence has not more,
Than every year are fables of this sort
Bawled from the pulpit on this side and that ;
So that the sheep, that do not understand,
Return from pasture having fed on wind,
Nor does excuse them not to see their loss.
To his first congregation said not Christ :
Go forth, and to the world preach idle tales ; ¹¹⁰
But the foundation true he gave to them :
And this was sounded only from their lips,
So that to battle, to light up the Faith,
They bore the Gospel's bucklers and its spears. ¹¹⁵

⁶ The commonest names in Florence.

Now they go forth with jestings and with quips
To preach ; and if they only raise a laugh,
They puff the cowl, and nothing further ask.
But such a bird is nestled in the hood,
That if the vulgar saw, they would not take
The pardon, in which now they put their trust ; 170
For which such folly in the earth has grown,
That without proof by any evidence,
To every promise give they their assent.
On this St. Antony makes fat his hog,
And others also, who than hogs are worse,
Who pay in money which a mint-stamp lacks.

“ But since we have too long digressed, return
Thy vision now to look on the straight path,
So that the way may shorten with the time.
This Nature so abundantly mounts up 130
In number, that there never was discourse,
Nor mortal thought, that did so far advance :
And if thou think'st of that which is revealed
By Daniel,⁷ in his thousands thou wilt see
That the exact enumeration lurks.
The Primal Light which radiates it all,
Is by it in as many ways absorbed,
As there are splendours with which it is joined.
Whence, since upon the action which conceives,
Affection follows, the sweetness of their love 140
In divers modes within it burns and glows.
Now mayst thou estimate the height and breadth
Of the Eternal Virtue, since all these
Mirrors are made, in which it is reflected,
Itself remaining single as before.”

⁷ Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. Daniel, vii. 10.



CANTO XXX.

ASCENT TO THE EMPYREAN.—THE HEAVENLY RIVER —THE
HEAVENLY ROSE.

At distance haply of six thousand miles ¹
On earth the sixth hour blazes, and the globe

¹ The gradual disappearance of the Angelic Triumph is compared to that of the stars upon earth at break of day; when (the earth being about 24,000 miles in circumference) it is the sixth hour, or noon, at places distant ninety degrees, that is about 6000 miles, to the East of the place where day is breaking.

Now slopes the shadows horizontally,
What time the midst of heaven, deep to us,
Begins to wear such aspect, that each star
It seems to lose in its profundity ;
And as comes on the brightest hand-maiden '
Of the Sun nearer, so the heavens close
From star to star, and with the fairest last ;
Not otherwise the triumph, which disports 10
Ever around the point which vanquished me,
Seeming begirt by that which it begirds,
By slow degrees did vanish from my sight ;
Wherefore to turn mine eyes on Beatrice,
The seeing nothing, and love prompted me.
If down to this what of her has been said
Were all included in one eulogy,
It would be poor to set forth this occasion.
The beauty, which I gazed on thus, transcends 20
Not only our minds, but I truly think .
Alone its Maker wholly this enjoys.
I own me conquered by this incident
More than at any time by his theme's point
Was tragical or comic bard o'ercome ;
For, like the sun which dazzles most the sight,
So the remembrance of that lovely smile
Deprives my faculties of their own use :
From the first day when first I saw her face
In earthly life, and downwards to this view,
The sequence of my verse has not been broken ; 30
But henceforth mine attendance must not wait
More on her beauty in my poetry,
E'en like an artist who has done his best.

In such guise, (which I leave to loftier strains
Than of my trumpet, which has now deduced

Its arduous subject matter to an end)
With voice and gesture of a watchful guide,
She recommenced : " We now have gone from forth
The largest orb, to the pure sphere of light ;
Light intellectual surcharged with love, 40
Love of the truth replenished with delight,
Delight which all enjoyment doth transcend !
Here wilt thou see the one and other host
Of Paradise, and one³ in the same forms
Which at the latest Judgment thou wilt see."

Like to a sudden flash which puts to rout
The visual spirits, so that it deprives
The eye for strongest objects of its use ;
So there about me shone a brilliant light,
And left me compassed round with such a veil 50
Of its refulgence, that I nothing saw.

"Always the Love, which to this sphere gives peace,
With such a welcome to itself receives,
To make the candle fitted for its flame."

Received no sooner had within me been
This short address, than I became aware
That I above my own ability was raised ;
And with a vision new I was enkindled,
Such, that exists no light so purified
Towards which I could not have raised mine eyes. 60
And I beheld light in a river's shape,
Flashing forth radiance, between two banks
Enamelled by a wondrous time of spring.
And from this river issued living sparks,
Which midst the flowers settled all around,
Like rubies in a golden setting placed.
Then, with the odours as intoxicated,

³ The Angels, who will undergo no change at the Resurrection.

Again they sought the depths of that strange flood,
And as one entered, up another rose.

“The lofty wish, which burns and urges thee, 70
Knowledge to have of what thou dost behold,
Gives me more pleasure, as the more it swells :
But of this river thou must firstly drink,
Before so great a thirst in thee is quenched ;”
The Sun of mine eyes, thus did speak to me :
She added then : “The stream and Topazes
Coming and going, and the smiling flowers,
Are shadow-bearing preludes of their truth ;
Not that these matters in themselves are hard ; 80
But the deficiency is on thy side,
Who hast not yet thy sight so much upraised.”

The infant none such rapid movement makes
With face towards the milk, if it awakes
Much later than its usual custom is,
As I did, better mirrors to obtain
Yet of mine eyes, and to the water stooped
Which flows that it may excellence impart.
And of it drinking while the fringes were
Of mine eyelids, so it appeared to me 90
That from its long shape it grew circular.
Then like to people underneath a mask,
Seen different from as first, if they put off
The semblance not their own in which they hide ;
Thus became changed to greater joyfulness
The sparkles and the flowers, and I saw
Made manifest the Courts of Heaven both.
O radiance of God, by which I saw
The lofty triumph of the kingdom true,
Grant me the power to tell how this I saw !

Above a light is, which makes visible 100
Him who created to the creature, who

Only in seeing him enjoys his peace ;
And it is spread in figure circular
To distance such, that its circumference
Would be too wide a girdle for the sun.
Its whole appearance is composed of rays,
That strike the top of the Prime Moveable,⁴
Which takes from them its power and its life ;
And as a cliff in water at its base
Regards itself, to see how it is decked, 110
What time with green and flowers it is rich ;
So ranged above the Light on every side
Thousands of thrones themselves I saw regard,
Numerous as they who have returned from earth.
And if the last grade in itself collects
So great a light, what must be the expanse
Of this Rose to the farthest of its leaves ?
My vision by the breadth or by the height
Was not bedazzled, but embraced the whole—
The mode and vastness of that blessedness. 120

There, far or near, nor raises, nor degrades,
For where God reigns unintermediately
The laws of nature have no influence.
Into the yellow of the eternal Rose,
Which blows, and spreads in tiers, and renders up
Odours of praise to the aye vernal Sun,
Like one in silence, but in wish to speak,
Beatrice led me, and she said : “ Behold,
How great is the assemblage of white robes !
Behold our City what a round it makes ! 130
Behold our benches that so well are filled,
That for the future few are here expected.
In that great seat, to which thine eyes are held
Upon the crown already o’er it placed,

⁴ The Primum Mobile.

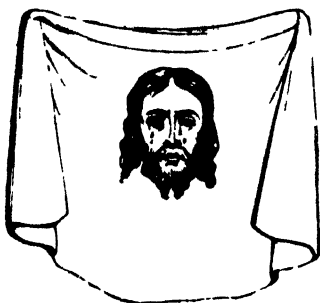
Before thou at this marriage feast shalt sup,
The soul will sit, that shall on earth be chief,
Of Henry great,⁵ who to right Italy
Will come, but sooner than she is prepared.
The blind cupidity that witches you,
Has made you to be like unto a child,
Dying of want, who drives away its nurse ;
And in the Church's forum will be chief
At that time one,⁶ who open or disguised,
Along the same path will not go with him.
But in short time he will be thrust by God
From the blest office : and he will be cast
Where Simon Magus bides for his deserts,
Him⁷ of Alagna lower down to drive."

⁵ The Emperor Henry 7th, who died 1313.

⁶ Clement 5th. (In. xix. 83. Pa. xvii. 82.)

⁷ Boniface 8th. (In. xix. 53. Purg. xx. 86.)





CANTO XXXI.

THE HEAVENLY ROSE.—ST. BERNARD.—THE GLORY OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN.

ON this wise then, in form of a white rose
Was shown to me the holy armament,
Which Christ with his own blood has made his spouse.
But that,¹ which flying doth behold and sing
The Glory of the One who fills their love,
And that Good which has made it such to be,
Like to a swarm of bees, in blossoms plunged
At one time, and now wending back their way
To where their labour turns to savour sweet,
Into that vast flower went down, which is decked
With leaves so many, and from thence arose
Where their Love has ever its abode :
faces they all had of living flame,
And wings of gold; the rest of such a white
That never snow to such degree attained :

¹ The armament of Angels.

When on the flower they settled, row by row,
They of that peace and ardent love gave forth,
Which they had gained the while they plied their wings.
Nor did the passing 'twixt the flower and height
Of such a multitude upon the wing
Impede the vision and the splendency ;
For the Divine Light interpenetrates,
As it is worthy, through the universe,
So that no thing can be its obstacle.
This kingdom happy and removed from care,
Replenished with the old race and the new,
All love and vision held upon one mark.

O Trinal Light, that in a single star
Shining on their regards, contentest them,
Look down upon our tempest on the earth !
If the barbarians, coming from that clime
Which every day is under Helicé,²
Revolving with her son on whom she doats,
When they saw Rome, and its prodigious works
Were struck with wonder, since the Lateran³
Above things mortal rose in excellence ;
I, who from human to what was divine,
And to eternity from time had come—
From Florence to a people just and wise,
With what astonishment must I have filled !
Truly between this and my joy I was
Pleased to hear nothing, and myself be mute :
And, like the pilgrim, who fresh vigour gains
Looking upon the temple of his vows,
And hopes thereafter to describe its place ;
So making passage through the living light,
Mine eyes I moved among the ranks of seats,

² Helicé, or Calisto ; the Great Bear, revolving in the northern sky, with her son Arcas changed into the Lesser Bear.

³ Put for the buildings of Rome generally.

Now up, now down, now sweeping them around.
And I saw sights, persuading me to love,
Of other lights adorned with their own joy,
And beautiful with acts of every grace.

The figure general of Paradise
Completely now my view had taken in,
Attentive fixed as yet on no one part ;
And with rekindled curiosity I turned
To interrogate the Lady mine of things,
In doubt of which my mind suspended hung.
One thing I meant, another answered me ;
I looked for Beatrice, but an old man saw⁴
Apparelled like the people glorified.
Over the cheeks and eyes he was suffused
With tender gladness, with a pious mien
Such as a loving father would befit.
And : " Where is she ? " I on the sudden said.
Then he : " To thy desire to put an end,
Beatrice led me from mine own abode.
And if thou wilt look up on the third row
Of the chief grade, thou wilt again see her
Upon the throne to which her merits led."
Without reply I lifted up mine eyes,
And her I saw, in likeness of a crown
Reflecting from herself the eternal rays.
From highest regions in which thunder rolls,
That mortal eye were not so far removed
Which to the ocean's lowest depths is plunged,
As was from Beatrice my point of sight ;
But nought this mattered ; for her visual form
Came to me by no medium confused.

" O Lady, in whom flourishes my hope,
And who for my salvation didst endure

⁴ St. Bernard (b. 1091, d. 1153).

'To leave the traces of thy feet in Hell;
By all the things, upon which I have looked,
Both of thy power, and thine excellence,
I recognise the virtue and the grace.
Thou from a slave to freedom hast me led,
By all the methods, and by all the ways,
Which thou couldst influence to achieve this thing :
Thy generosity towards me keep,
So that my soul, which thou hast rendered whole,
Pleasing to thee may from the body slip." 90
Thus I besought ; and she so far removed,
As it appeared, did smile, and looked on me ;
Then to the Eternal Fountain did she turn.
And the blest old man : " That thou mayst complete,"
He spoke on this wise, " perfectly thy way,
'To which have summoned me pure love and prayer,
'Take flight around this garden with thy looks ;
For seeing it will thy regards prepare
For rising higher by the ray divine.
And Heaven's Queen, through whom I am inflamed 100
Wholly by love, will do thee every grace
Because that I her faithful Bernard am."

Like one perchance that from Croatia
Our Veronica ⁵ to behold has come,
Who through its old fame is not satiated,
But says in thought, as it is shown to him,
" O Lord, Christ Jesus, who art truly God,
Was indeed such as this thy countenance ? "
Such was I as I marvelled at the quick
Affection of this one, who in this world, 110
In contemplation, tastes this peacefulness.

" This glad existence, O thou son of grace,"

⁵ The Veronica, or Vernicle ; the supposed impression of the face of the Saviour upon a handkerchief, preserved in St. Peter's at Rome.

Thus he began, " will not be known to thee,
Keeping thine eyes fixed only on the base :
But view the circles to the most remote,
So far that thou mayst sitting see the Queen,⁶
To whom this realm is subject and devoted."
I lifted up mine eyes ; and as at morn
The part of the horizon in the East
Surpasses that in which the sun sinks down ; 120
Thus, moving from the valley to the hill
With my regards, I saw a distant part
In light exceeding all the outer edge.
And as that region, for the car which waits
That Phaëton ill guided, is most lighted up,
And on each side of it the light is less ;
On such wise this pacific Oriflamme
Blazed in the middle, and on either side
In the like manner paler grew the light.
And to that middle point with outspread wings 130
A thousand Angels hasting I could see,
Each one distinct in brightness and in force.
There I saw on their sports, and on their songs
A beauty smiling, that a source of joy
Was in their eyes to all the other Saints.
And if I had such riches in my speech
As in my thoughts, I could not be so bold
As to attempt the least of their delights.
Bernard, when he might note that my regards
Upon his fervid zeal were fixed and bent, 140
With such affection turned on them his own,
That mine became to gaze yet more intent.

⁶ The Virgin Mary.

CANTO XXII.

THE SAINTS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

THAT gazer, fixed upon his pleasure's source,
A teacher's generous office took on him,
And in these blessed accents he began :
" The wound which Mary did anoint and close,
She,' who is at her feet so beautiful,
It was, that open laid, and did inflict:
Upon the rank by the third benches made,
Underneath her is Rachel in her seat
With Beatrice, as thou mayst now behold.
Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, and that one '
The singer's ancestress, who in remorse
For his fault, *Miserere mei* said,
Thou mayst observe in like mode, tier by tier,
Downward descend, as I by name of each
Go through the rose, a-down from leaf to leaf.
And from the seventh grade, below, as well
As downwards to it, Hebrews follow on,
Dividing all the petals of the flower ;
Because according to the view they have

1 Eve.

² Ruth, the ancestress of David, indicated as the writer of the penitential psalm, Miserere. (Ps. li.)

Of faith in Christ, these the partition are
At which divided are the sacred stairs.³

“ Upon this side, on which the flower is ripe
In all its petals, are in session ranged
Those who believed in Christ about to come :
Upon the other side, where are cut through
By vacancy the semicircles, are
Those who their looks directed to Christ come.
And as upon this side, the glorious seat
Of Heaven’s Lady, and the other seats
Underneath it, such separation make ;
So on the other, does that of great John,
Who, holy aye, the wilderness and death
Endured, and afterwards for two years Hell ;⁴
And below him, so separating, come
Francis, and Augustine, and Benedict,
And others to the bottom, row by row.
Note now the lofty Providence divine :
How one and other aspect of the Faith
This garden equally will occupy ;
And know that from the lower tier, which cuts
The two divisions in its middle course,
They do not sit by merits of their own,
But that of others’, under certain laws ;
For all of these are souls that were released
Before their true elections they could make.
This by their faces thou mayst well perceive,

³ The Saints of the Old and of the New Testament (the first viewing Christ as coming, and the latter as come) sit in opposite halves of the rose ; and the demarcation between them is shown by the line of seats of Hebrew women, each under each, descending from the Virgin Mary ; and which rises again through the seats of St. Francis, &c., to that of St. John the Baptist, which is on the highest row of the other side, and opposite to the seat of the Virgin. In the lower tiers all round, are the souls of children.

⁴ John the Baptist’s death was two years before the completion of the work of Redemption by the death of Christ.

And also by their voices infantine,
If thou wilt look, and hearken to them well.

“ But I will loose for thee the mighty bonds,
In which thy subtle thoughts have fettered thee. 50
Within the ample circuit of this realm
Not the least accidental thing has place,
Such as is sadness, hungering, or thirst ;
For by eternal statutes is ordained
All which thou seest, so that perfectly
Here to the finger corresponds the ring.
And therefore this race that has been advanced
To the true life, is not without a cause
Among themselves less excellent or more.
The King, through whom this kingdom is at rest 60
In so much love, and in so much delight,
That no desire is any more perceived,
In his own joyful aspect every mind
Creating, at his pleasure gifts with grace
Diversely ; and the fact is here enough.
And this express and clearly may be seen
In Holy Scripture in those brother twins⁵
Whose anger was within their mother stirred.
Wherefore, accordant with the tresses’ hue,
The most exalted radiance of this grace 70
Is, as a chaplet, fittingly bestowed.
Hence, not to recompense their course of life,
They are in varying precedence ranged,
Differing only in their earliest bent.
Thus in the early ages did suffice
With innocence, salvation to obtain,
The parents’ Faith, without addition else.
After the early stages were fulfilled,

⁵ Esau and Jacob, Gen. xxv. 22—referred to by St. Paul, Romans ix. 10, in illustration of the doctrine of election.

In males 'twas needful for their innocent wings
By circumcision to acquire strength ; 80
But since the time, that has arrived, of Grace,
Without the efficient baptism of Christ
Such innocence within the deep is held.
Now look upon the visage that to Christ
Is most alike ; because its radiance
Alone can make thee fit to look on Christ."

Above her I beheld such joyousness
Raining, that was conveyed by the good souls
Created through this height to fly across ;
That all which hitherto I had beheld 90
Had not perplexed me with such marvelling,
Nor shown me such an imaging of God.
And that Love, which descended thence the first,
Singing : " Hail, Mary, that art filled with grace !"
In front of her extended forth his wings.
Made answer to this minstrelsy divine
From every side the Court beatified,
So that the sight more beautiful became.
" O holy Father, who for me dost bear
To come below, leaving thy joyous seat, 100
In which thou sittest by eternal lot,
Who is that Angel, who with so much joy
Fixes upon our Queen's eyes his regards,
So full of love, that he of fire doth seem ?"

Thus to the teaching I again returned
Of him who beautiful by Mary grew
As by the Sun the planet of the morn.
Then he to me : " Serenity and grace,
Much as may be in Angel or in soul,
Are all in him, as we would have it be ; 110
Because he is the one who bore the palm
To Mary down, what time the Son of God

Chose to assume our burden to himself.
 But travel with thine eyes now, e'en as I
 Shall move in speaking, and the great Lords note
 Of this most just and holiest empire.
 Those two, who sit above, the happiest,
 Because the nearest to the Empress placed,
 Are as it were the two roots of this rose. 120
 He, that upon the left hand side is placed,
 The father⁶ is, through whose audacious taste
 The human species so much bitter tastes.
 Upon the right behold that father old⁷
 Of Holy Church, unto whom Christ the keys
 Committed of this flower beautiful.
 And he⁸ who all the heavy times beheld,
 Before he came to death, of the fair Spouse
 Who by the spear and by the nails was won,
 Beside him sits; and by the other rests 131
 'That leader,⁹ under whom the manna saw,
 The fickle, stubborn, and ungrateful race.
 Opposite Peter see where Anna sits,
 So happy as she on her daughter looks,
 She moves no eye, as she Hosannah sings.
 And opposite the great Sire of the stock
 Lucia¹ sits, who did thy Lady move
 When thou wast ready to abase thine eyes.
 But since the time of slumber passes by,
 Here let us pause, like to a tailor good 140
 Who shapes his robe, according to his cloth :
 And let us turn our eyes to the first Love,
 So that, in gazing, thou mayst penetrate
 As far as possible, his radiance.
 Truly lest haply backward thou shouldst glide,
 Moving thy wings, when thinking to advance ;

⁶ Adam. ⁷ St. Peter.
⁸ St. John. ⁹ Moses. ¹ In. ii. 97.

Thou must now supplicate for grace by prayer,
For grace from her who can extend thee help ;
And with affection thou wilt follow me,
So that thy heart will not stray from my words ;” 150
And he began this holy orison.

CANTO XXXIII.

THE BEATIFIC VISION

“O VIRGIN Mother, daughter of thy Son,
Than other creatures lowlier, yet more raised,
Of the Eternal Counsel the fixed term,
Thou art she, who the nature of mankind
Hast so ennobled, that its Fashioner
Did not disdain his own work to become.
Within thy womb thus kindled was the Love,
By whose warmth in eternal peacefulness
On this wise has this flower blossomed forth.
Here thou art to us as a noon-day torch 10
Of love, and among mortals on the earth
Thou art a living fountain-spring of hope.
Lady, thou art so great and powerful,
That whoso seeks grace and turns not to thee,
His wish aspires to flying without wings.
Not only thy benignity gives aid
To them who ask for it, but oftentimes
It liberally anticipates the prayer.
Mercy in thee, within thee piety,
Within thee grandeur, within thee unites 20
Whatever is in creatures excellent !¹
Now this man, who from the deepseated gulf
Of the universe, as far as this has seen

¹ This address to the Virgin Mary has been copied by Chaucer in the Second Nonnes Tale.

The spiritual beings, one by one,
By grace of virtue makes his prayer to thee,
Only that with his eyes he may be raised
To greater height, to the last blessedness.
And I who never for mine own view longed
More than for his, my supplications all
Before thee lay, and pray they may avail :
That thou mayst clear away from him all clouds
Of his mortality by thine own prayers,
That Highest Joy may be revealed to him.
Farther, I pray thee, Queen, who canst perform
Whate'er thou wilt, that thou wouldst sane preserve,
After so great a sight, his intellects.
Let thy protection human movements quell ;
See Beatrice, and what a blessed host,
My prayers to second, clasp to thee their hands."

The eyes that are revered and loved by God,
Turned on the suppliant, displayed to him
How grateful to them were his prayers devout.
From thence on the Eternal Light they gazed,
On which we cannot deem that may direct
The eyes so stedfast any creature else.
And I, who to the end of all desires
Was drawing near, as was becoming me,
The eagerness of longing in me quenched.

Bernard made signal to me, and he smiled,
That I should look above me ; but I was
Already of myself such as he willed ;
Whereon my vision, grown more purified,
Did more and more pierce through the radiance
Of the High Light which in itself is true.
Thereafter what I saw was all too vast
For human language, which to such sight yields,
And memory yields to such surpassingness.

Like to a man who sees á thing in sleep,
And when the dream is past, its tone impressed
Stays, and the rest returns not to his mind, 60
Such am I, for as it were ceases all
My power of sight, and for me yet distil
Within my soul the sweets that spring from it.
Before the sun so fades away the snow ;
Before the wind so on the flying leaves
Was scattered wide the Sibyl's oracle.

O Highest Light, that art so much upraised
From mortal comprehension, to my mind
Lend again something of what then was seen ;
And make my tongue to be so powerful, 70
That one spark only of thy gloriousness
'To future ages it may leave behind ;
For by restoring something to my brain,
And by being something in these verses sung,
More will be known of thy supremacy.
I think, from the acuteness I endured
Of the bright Radiance, I should have been lost,
If from it had mine eyes been turned away.
And I remember that I was more bold
So much to endure by this, that I engaged 80
My sight with Power of Infinity.
O Grace abundant, by which I presumed
'To fix my gaze upon the Eternal Light
So much, that there my vision I fulfilled !

In its profound I saw that was contained,
By love within a single volume bound,
What through the universe is opened wide ;
Substance, and accidents, and all their modes,
In fashion such together all were bound,
That what I tell of, is a Single Light. 90
The universal figure of this knot

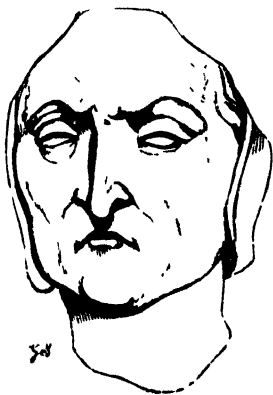
I think that I saw, wherefore more at large
 As I describe it, to rejoice I seem.
 One instant brings me more forgetfulness
 Than centuries twenty five to the emprise,¹
 When Neptune wondered at the Argo's shade.
 Thus, wholly occupied, my faculties
 Gazed fixed, attentive and immoveable,
 And ever were more eager to behold.
 Before this Light they are so modified, 100
 That to turn from it to another sight
 It is impossible they should consent;
 Because the Good, the object of the will,
 Is centred all in it, and forth of it
 Defective is what there is perfected.
 Henceforward what I say will fall more short
 Of my remembrance, than the talk of babes
 Who still the lips upon the bosom press.
 Not that was more than one similitude
 Within the Living Light on which I gazed, 110
 Which ever such is as it was before:
 But to my sight, which grew in potency
 Within me, as I looked, the single semblance,
 I myself changing, was resolved for me:
 In the profound and clear subsistency
 Of the deep Light appeared to me three rings
 Of colours three, and in dimension one:
 And, as 'twixt rainbows, so from one the other²
 Appeared reflected; and the third seemed flame 120
 Which equally was breathed from both of them.
 O how imperfect speech is, and how weak
 For my ideas! and these in what I saw
 Are such as little serves not to express.

O Light Eternal, resting in thyself,

¹ The Argonautic expedition; here supposed to have taken place
 B.C. 1200.

² The inner and the outer bows.

Only 'Thou know'st Thyself, by Thyself known,
And Thyself knowing Thou dost love and smile!
The circle, that in such manner produced
Appeared in thee, as is reflected light,
When for a time it was by mine eyes viewed,
Within itself in its own colouring .
Appeared to me as tinted by man's form ;
Wherefore my gaze was wholly on it bent.
Like the geometer who close applies
To square the circle, and discovers not,
By reasoning, the principle he seeks,
Such one did I become at this new sight ;
I wished to see in what way was made apt
Our image to the circle, and was there ;
But not enough for this thing were my wings ;
If it had not been that my mind was smitten
By a light, in which its desire arrived.
To the high Vision here my power fails ;
For now was turning my desire and will,
Like to a wheel that evenly is urged,
'The Love which moves the Sun and other stars.



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